May/June 2006

Alternative CENTRAL

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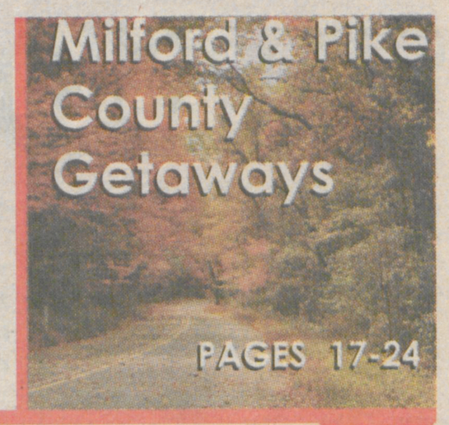

$80 Million Event: Gay Games Sponsored by Exelon Corp.

Chicago-based Exelon Corporation, parent company of Commonwealth Edison, is sponsoring the 2006 Gay Games July 15-22 in Chicago. Exelon joins at the "Allstar" level and will support the power lifting competition slated for Northwestern University's Welsh-Ryan Arena.

The event is expected to draw 12,000 athletes from more than 100 countries who for eight days will compete in 30 sports ranging from softball to dancesport, swimming to tennis, and arts and culture, and social events.

"Exelon is proud of its commitment to diversity," said John Rowe, Exelon Chairman, president and CEO. "We welcome the opportunity to support the Gay Games, which celebrate both diversity and sport, and enrich the lives of so many.

"The Gay Games will provide an $80 million jolt to the Chicago area economy next year, and will shine a light on Chicago's deserved reputation as a city that is warm and welcoming to everyone," said Larry Kuhn, Exelon's director of strategic corporate alliances.

Exelon Corporation

Exelon Corporation is one of the nation's largest electric utilities with approximately 5.2 million customers and more than $14 billion in annual revenues. The company has one of the industry's largest portfolios of electricity generation capacity, with a nationwide reach and strong positions in the Midwest and Mid-Atlantic. Exelon distributes electricity to approximately 5.2 million customers in northern Illinois and Pennsylvania and gas to more than 460,000 customers in the Philadelphia area. Exelon is headquartered in Chicago and trades on the NYSE under the ticker EXC.

Gay Games VII

Gay Games VII Sports and Cultural Festival events range from softball to dancesport, swimming to tennis. The week-long event includes band, cheerleading and color guard performances, chorus, an ancillary arts festival, and a series of community-organized social events and parties.

Chicago Bears' Soldier Field

The opening ceremony is July 15 at Soldier Field, the lakefront home stadium of American-style football's Chicago Bears. Closing ceremony is July 22 at Wrigley Field, the home of Major League Baseball's Chicago Cubs, located in the heart of Chicago's largest glbt neighborhood.

Television coverage is by Q Television Network. Other sponsors include Walgreens, Chicago Sun-Times, Chicago Free Press, and more than 120 other business sponsors.

1st Gay Pride Parade Marches Along

The Pride Festival of Central PA is hosting the 1st Gay Pride Parade for Central PA on July 29, 10 am, the same day as PrideFest). The parade launches from the corner of North Street and North Front St. and proceeds down North Front St., ending at South Front St near the PrideFest event.

In the last issue, parade volunteer chairperson Dan Stroup gave readers the basics on "Gay Parade 101." This time around the he talks more about the need for community and also the nuts and bolts – and taffeta – needed for a successful parade.

Alternative Central: How's the parade going? What kind of response from the community are you getting?

Dan Stroup: The plans are going very well. We're starting to get applications. Volunteers are signing up to help bring the event to life. Sponsorships are a little low, but we expect them to pick up as we approach Pride day.

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BAGAL Hosts National Groups

First came the National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce. Next comes the Human Rights Campaign. The Business Association of Gays and Lesbians (BAGAL) is looking to reinvigorate itself. Become more visible. Be of service. Attract more active members.

In March, BAGAL hosted the Washington, DC based National Gay and Lesbian Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC). The chamber's co-founder and president Justin Nelson spoke to the local group. The local organization is looking to reinvigorate itself.

Nelson noted that NGLCC sprang from the needs of glbt businesses to have an organization that addressed their needs. Such groups also provide a voice for diversity issues relat-

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Common Roads Benefit Supports Youth

Join Common Roads for a tropical extravaganza – Tropicanza - Sunday, June 11, 3 p.m. – 7 p.m. at What If…Café, Harrisburg.

Common Roads provides Friday-night activities and Sunday drop-in hours. Youth meet and attend educational programs, youth-focused arts and leadership projects. CR also offers training to schools and social-service providers on lgbtq issues. The organization provides resource materials to area organizations and individuals,

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With the theme of "Strides Fighting Strife" central Pennsylvania's AIDS Community Alliance and its United Services Program Partners hosts AIDS Walk 2006 on Sunday, May 7.

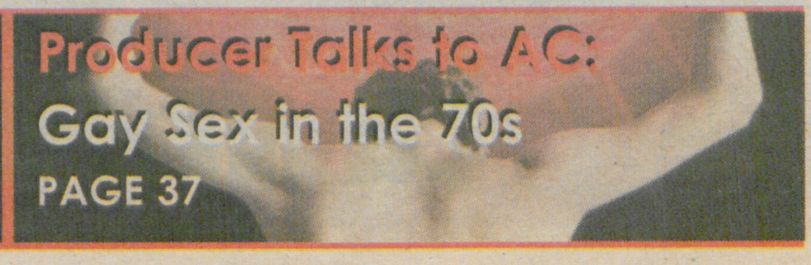
Central Penn Business Journal recently announced AIDS Community Alliance and the United Services Programs Partnership was selected as a finalist for the 2006 Nonprofit Innovation Awards. The agency had been nominated in the category for innovation in collaboration.

The annual walk to raise awareness and funds to support HIV/AIDS services and prevention programming in our local south central Pennsylvania community will be held at Riverfront Park (South) in Harrisburg.

For additional information or to request a pledge sheet please contact Vicki DiSylvester, Director of Events & Development, or call 1-800-867-1550.

Seth Gold at Club Z April 27 Page 30

Women's Weekend May 26-28 PAGE 13



Producer Talks to AC: Gay Sex in the 70s PAGE 37

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Letters to the Editor

Milford

Dear Editor,

Picked up a copy of Alternative Central at Nellie's Café in Milford. Enjoyed it immensely.

Best,
John

Better & Better

Dear Editor,

Thanks so much for the work Kristen and you do for the newspaper. It's such a vital part of the glbt community in central Pennsylvania. And the publication gets better and better every issue!

Jeff, a reader

Appreciated Article

Dear Attorney Cordier and Editor Pizzoli,

As a regular reader of Alternative Central, I want to tell you that I appreciated your article. Seems that blood is a subject just recently taken up by the lobbyist groups here and there, from what I've heard.

For being honest with the blood bank, I have been "deferred" since 1985 - although HIV negative and with a rare blood type to boot. I had completely forgotten about my "deferred" status when I called to schedule an appointment to donate late last year...yup, still blacklisted, and blacklisted by Social Security number, so there's nowhere in the United States that I can donate blood and receive credit. My reward for honesty over an inane question asked twenty years ago is that neither I nor my family can benefit from donations I would do faithfully, given the opportunity.

Further, the "deferment" equates male homosexuality automatically with HIV, when we know better, and stigmatizes both male homosexuality and the HIV-positive status. So much for human dignity and federal wisdom.

Cordially,
Dan

Stonewall Democrats Endorse Rendell & Casey

At their March meeting attended by 17 members, the Capital Region Stonewall Democrats

endorsed Ed Rendell and State Treasurer Bob Casey for the May 16 Primary Election.

Casey is running for the US Senate against sitting Senator Rick Santorum.

Casey last month attended a Human Rights Campaign gala in Philadelphia where he TK

For central Pennsylvania state representative races, CRSD also endorsed:

87th District (Camp Hill, part of Wormleysburg, and East Pennsboro, Hampden and Silver Spring townships): Joe Lombardi (www.gojoewin.org)

95th District (York City area): Rep. Steve Stetler (http://repstetler.com)

103rd District (Harrisburg, Steelton, Highspire and part of Swatara Township): Rep. Ron Buxton (www.ronbuxton.com). Buxton, who supports civil unions, addressed the group at the endorsement meeting.

104th District (Susquehanna Township, Penbrook, Paxtang and most of northern Dauphin County): Dennis Coffman (717-541-1389; dencoffman@mac.com). Coffman also addressed the group.

CRSD decided not to endorse a candidate for the lieutenant governor's race or the 91st District state House race in Adams and Franklin Counties.

For information, contact CRSD co-chair Ben Turner: www.capitalstonewall.org

Gay Pride Parade continued

The community has been overwhelming with their response and support. Many groups are busy planning for the big day.

We've also had some negative responses but that's to be expected. What's been surprising is that some of it comes from our own community. That's sad because the parade's sole purpose is find unity and common ground. So we can go forward to a greater future.

To those who are fearful of what this event can become, please be assured that the PrideFest committee and the many involved groups are standing together to insure that the glbt community is only presented in a positive light.

AC: We understand that the committee must raise about $10,000 for the parade. Why so much? Will there be fundraising events?

DS: The parade's largest expense comes from closing the streets and paying Harrisburg City Police for security during the event. We need a police officer at every block to ensure safety.

Other expenses include mailing, marketing, and advertising materials. Fundraisers for the parade include a Dine-Out evening on June 27. On Friday July 28, the Harrisburg Men's Chorus will host a night of music benefiting the parade.

AC: What's the current status of the Parade web site?

DS: The website is up and running. Friends at "Computer Solutions for Less" designed and host the site. There you can view a parade route map, download an application and get sponsorship information at www.Centralpagayprideparade.org. please sign the guestbook. We want to hear your feedback.

AC: Is there an application deadline?

DS: We would like to see applications submitted as soon as possible. That would help us better organize the parade's marching order. Applications will accepted until July 21.

We will not be able to honor

continued on page 8

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Newspage

Freehand Gallery Offers Shared Space

Freehand Gallery is an artisan cooperative gallery specializing in the handcrafted work of over 70 local artisans. The gallery has three rooms filled with handcrafted jewelry, wearable articles, scarves, bags, wall art, glasswork, pottery, creative cards, and vintage treasures. Artisan demonstrations occur on some Saturdays. Painter Mary Ann Shaw is available to customize your home with her decorative painting and murals. Located at 407 Market Street, Lemoyne. Open Tues. – Sat., 11am – 4 PM.

New HIV Test & Counseling Site in Columbia

AIDS Community Alliance recently announced plans for a new HIV Testing and Counseling Site at Community Life Network at the Columbia Health Center located at the Lancaster General Hospital, Columbia, PA. In partnership with the Community Life Network of Columbia, ACA offers free confidential and anonymous HIV testing every Thursday.

The site will use the Orasure Oral HIV Test. Testing and counseling is available every Thursday from 10 AM - 4 PM. Those seeking testing should simply ask for the Community Life Network at the reception desk upon entering the building. The new location is ACA's sixth HIV Testing and Counseling Site in south central Pennsylvania. For more information on this or other ACA test sites, contact Ed Granger, Education services Manager, 1-800-867-1550.

What's Your Story?

Our talented freelance writer Sharon Muzio, RN BS NCTMB and owner of Alta View Wellness Center, wants to know your story. She's looking for glbt individuals, and their supporters, who are mentors, role models and or advocates.

Muzio's wants to recognize individuals who make a difference in our community.

She wants to portray the many ways - both inside and outside the gay community - that so many glbt folks contribute to their communities. She is in search of people who give of themselves to help others, people who donate services or time to people in need, or people with interesting lives (couples married in another state, adoptive parents, professionals who do "pro bono" work for people in need, people who aided in the Katrina effort.

"Many glbt individuals contribute so much to their neighborhodds and communities Muzio says. "We want others to know the rainbow of characters and bright colors they bring to life."

Activists lament the fact because glbt people still fear job loss and discrimination for no other reason than their choice of partner - and therefore may still be "in hiding" - that younger gay people go without knowing there are so many good, and wholesome, and positive, and loving role models out there to emulate. "I hope to offer examples of good people for our younger - and older - glbt readers to appreciate," Muzio says.

Interested individuals or readers with a suggestion are encouraged to contact Muzio at cntr4welnes@aol.com. Title your email AC-Response. She will acknowledge receipt of all communications.

Mid-Atlantic Men's Gathering May 26-29

It's always good to expand our circle of friends. As Bette Midler once sang, "You got to have friends to make that day last long." But where do we meet people who are welcoming and understanding? It's the perennial question for gay men."

For over fifteen years men from throughout the Mid-Atlantic region have gathered together twice a year. They have camped and danced around fires and shared their lives with one another. From all backgrounds, doctors, writers, teachers, lawyers, professors, firemen, have found a welcoming place at the Mid-Atlantic Men's Gathering, which bills itself as a gathering for "queer and queer-friendly men." The gathering was held for many years near at a retreat center near Breezewood, but last Fall moved to its present location an hour north of Harrisburg.

According to one of the organizers, Cor Beau, the event began about fifteen years ago in Virginia. "It was initially a gathering for men to explore notions of masculinity. While it continues some of that work, it's become a kind of biennial community for men to re-energize themselves." The gathering has grown in participation over the years. "Men have tended to come from Washington, DC and New York, but we've had people come from as far away as Kentucky and California" said Beau. Many participants return to the gathering year after year to rekindle friendships that have made.

While at the gathering participants enjoy a variety of activities including nightly drumming circles and bonfires. Michael delVecchio, from Washington, DC, describes it as a sharing of experiences and talents. "You never know what workshops will be offered but they're always interesting," he said. "One year we had workshops in beading, Ukrainian egg painting, and tye-dye. But we've also had more conversational workshops like "Gender 101" and "gay storytelling." According to their website they also have daily yoga sessions and breathwork sessions.

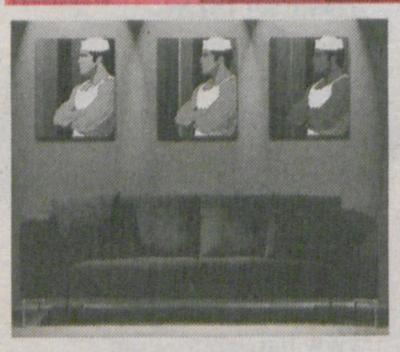
"This is not Fire Island or some resort experience. Men gather for community. To have real conversations and make real connections," said Beau. While most of the attendees tend to be gay, the planners make great efforts to include men from all backgrounds and orientations. They also work to make sure that it is available to men of all class backgrounds. Although the new space allows for some inside sleeping, the gathering still remains a mostly camping event. The organizers keep costs down and offer scholarships so that a broad range of men can attend.

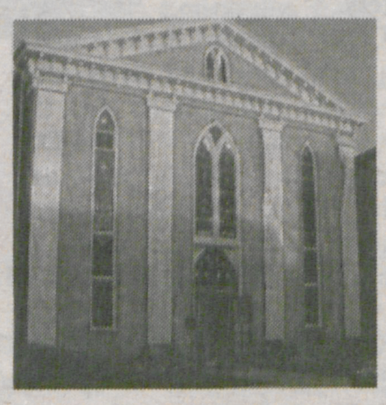
DelVecchio, who works for a non-profit in Washington, DC, considers it a second family. "There are people I only see at the men's gathering twice a year. I consider them a second family. It's become such an important part of my life."

This bi-annual event celebrates its Spring Gathering Memorial Day Weekend and its Fall Gatherette in September. For more information check out their website at www.themensgathering.org

Contact: CorBeauFae. Dan Vera is the managing editor of White Crane, a gay journal of wisdom and culture. He lives in Washington, DC.

2ND Floor Gallery





May 20th - "Gallery Saturday"
Wine and Cheese Artist Reception and "Sculptural Gardens Opening for the 2006 Season" 7pm to 10pm.
2nd Floor featured artist: Marsha Lucidi. 1st Floor Gallery featured artists: The Mechanicsburg High School Senoir Show. Join us for live music in the gallery, on the 1st floor and in the gardens. Free admission. Everyone welcome!

June 17th - "Gallery Saturday"
Wine and Cheese Artist Reception. 7pm to 10pm. 2nd Floor Gallery featured artist: Linda Buckwalter. 1st Floor Gallery featured artist: Sandy McKeehan. Live music and great art. Everyone welcome!

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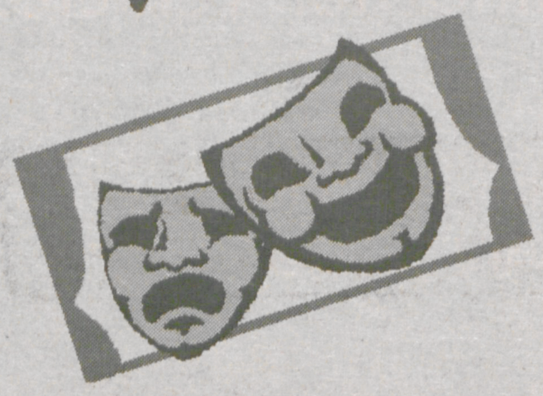

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How Do Young Gay Men Stay Healthy?

By Shane Thomas

Springtime is finally here, when the thoughts of every gay young man turn to swimsuit season. Time to hit the gym and try to remember where the deltoid muscles are (Hint: they're not in your legs).

You know the mantra. No pain, no gain. No South Beach (Phase I), no Poodle Beach. No tan, no ... well, you get the idea.

Most guys get a little more health conscious when swimsuit season arrives. Well, OK, a lot more. Pecs that were fine in January look soggy in the cruel light of May. Reality hurts, but also offers an opportunity for self-improvement, however you define it.

Self-improvement, though, usually isn't achieved in a vacuum. It also takes community and mutual encouragement, which is why 30Below exists: To provide a supportive environment for every young gay guy's pursuit of his own best self.

'Cause let's face it, every guy ultimately has to make his own decision about what kind of person he wants to be, both inside and out. When it comes to health, for example, different people are comfortable with different levels of risk. One man's tanning lotion is another man's sun screen. Either way, it helps to know where you're starting out. When it comes to diet, the scale doesn't lie. Those digital numbers are staring you in the face. When it comes to your skin, it can be harder to tell: Is that melanoma or just the mole you never before noticed?

When it comes to what's going on inside your body, you can guess, or find out fur sure. National HIV Testing Day and swimsuit season come close together: June 27. Testing is free, confidential, and is super easy to cross off your list of health concerns. It's simpler than a head-to-toe check for sun damage (though not as much fun if you don't do your own checking). Lots of guys out there don't know their HIV status. But testing can be just part of the routine at a time when men are paying a little more attention to their health anyway.

Most guys want to look good and feel good during the social season. Make sure you're ready to go, from head to toe, inside and out. And if you're a gay guy between the ages of 18-29, you are welcome at new events put on for young gay men, by young gay men. Become part of 30Below and meet guys, have fun, and help build a healthy and safe community.

For more info about 30Below, National HIV Testing Day, or testing in general, call (717) 215-8437.

The Art Association of Harrisburg Presents:

78th Annual Juried Exhibition, May 13-June 15 - Opening reception Sat.,May 13, 6-9 PM.

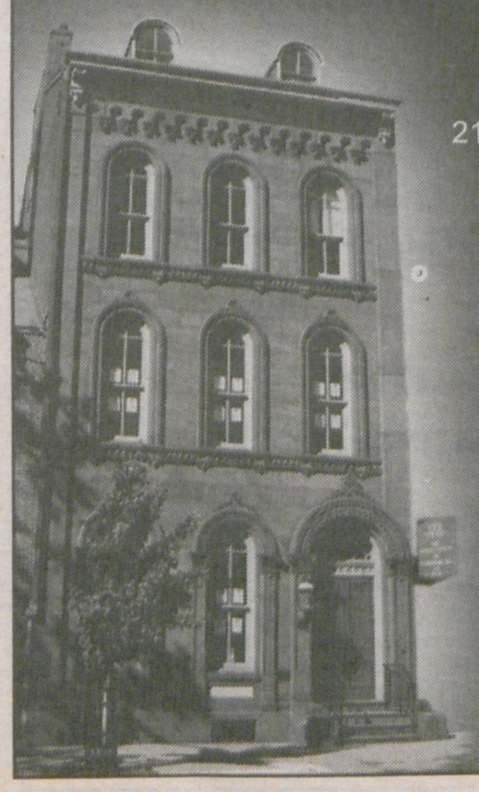
80th Anniversary Celebration & Annual Meeting - Thursday, May 25, 5:30-7:30 PM.

Art Association OF HARRISBURG

Art School Annual Exhibition, June 24-July 27 - Opening reception Sat., June 24, 5-8 PM.

Summer Art Classes for Kids/Adults - July 10-August 19.

PSECU "Art in the Park" for ages 5-12, July 17-28.



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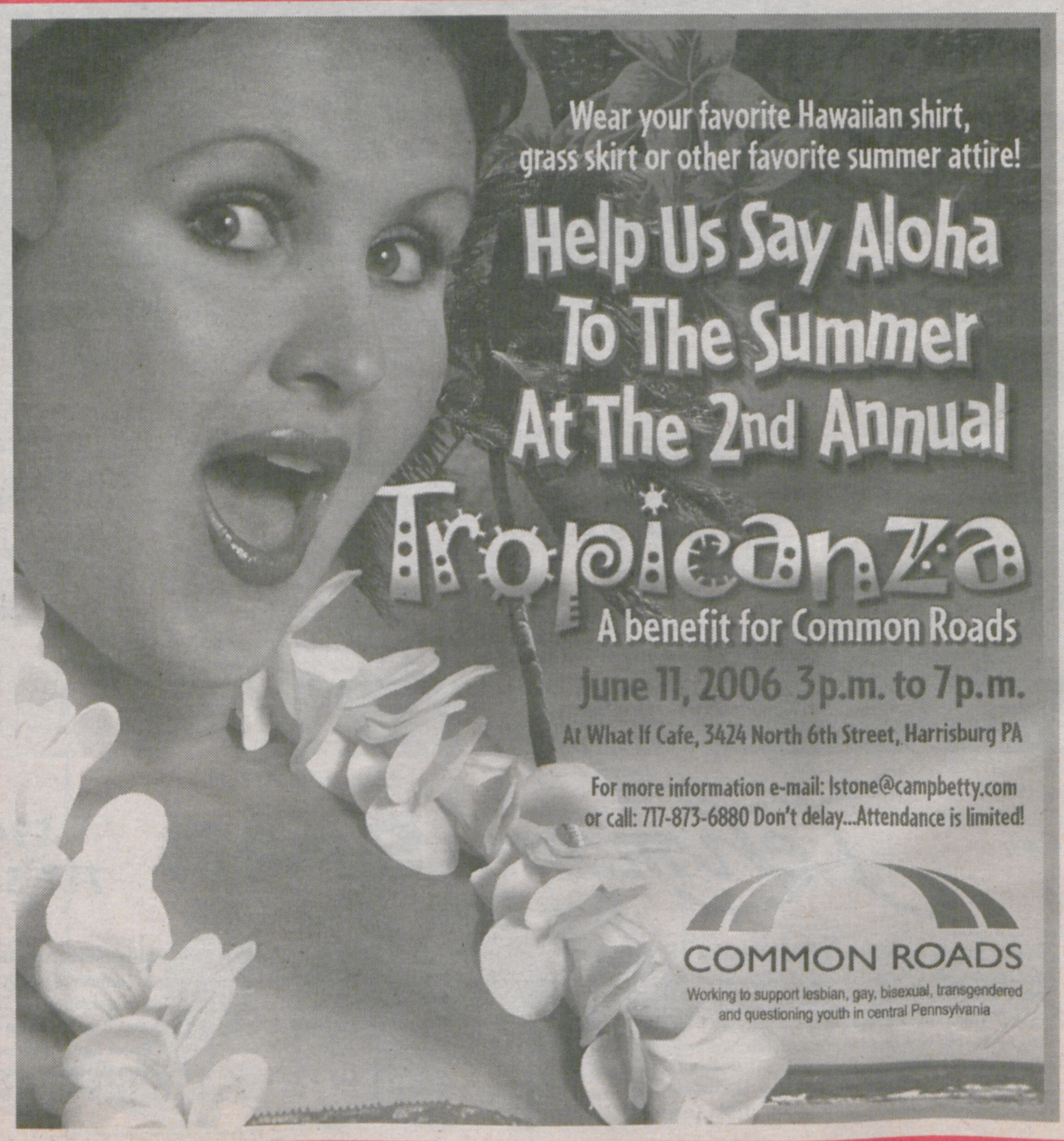

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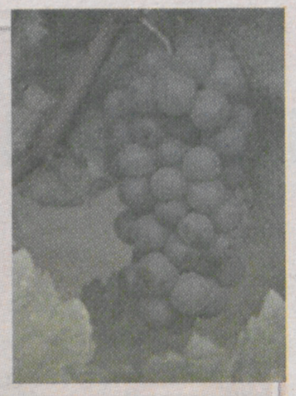

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62 Artists "Do Lunch" Raises $4,400

Friends of Midtown Harrisburg recently announced that their "62 Artists Do Lunch" exhibit and weekend event was a great success. More than $4,400 was raised from the sale of the art lunchboxes which will entirely go to the two food charities: The Salvation Army Kitchen and Harris Street Church's Loves of Love. Additionally, over $2,000 of artwork was sold on behalf of local artists exhibiting in the side rooms.

Approximately 350 people came out to opening night. Among those present was Mayor Stephen R. Reed, who kindly presented Friends of Midtown with a proclamation declaring March 31, 2006 as "62 Artists Do Lunch Project Day."

Live music from Lancaster's Gadjo Playboys added lively warmth to the reception, as well as delicious snacks from Harrisburg's Mangia Qui (3rd & North) and Harrisburg's Alvaro's Bread and Pastry Shoppe (Green & Peffer).

Live flute & guitar music from Elliot & Gorski also accompanied the exhibit.

Throughout the weekend the exhibit saw a steady flow of people. Lunchbox artist and participant Jonathan Smith commented on the success of the weekend, "Living in Harrisburg, I am always excited to discover local arts events right here in the city, and this [62 Artists Do Lunch] is even better since the funds are going for a good cause!"

Friends of Midtown will continue to auction off the unsold lunchboxes online until June. Watch our website (www.friendsofmidtown.org) for more information, coming soon.

The organizers also thanked Councilwoman Gloria Martin-Roberts and Tim Fulton of Susquehanna Real Estate, the participating artists, and sponsoring businesses.

Checks to the food programs were presented on April 10.

Third Street Corridor

The Initiative continues to meet. The group is developing a Five Point Approach of the Elm Street Grant Program. The Elm Street Program aims to improve the situation of Pennsylvania's urban neighborhoods while linking revitalization efforts to those in nearby Main Streets/downtowns. The Elm Street Concept is structured around simultaneous actions in five focus areas, including:

- Clean, Safe and Green
- Neighbors and Economy
- Design
- Image and Identity
- Sustainable Organization

Crime Prevention Committee

The ambitious group is also organizing a Crime Prevention Committee which meets at Harrisburg's Salvation Army, corner of Green & Cumberland, 2nd Floor Auditorium. The new committee is looking for volunteers. Guests who have previously addressed the committee include Community Policing Coordinator Oscar Douglas and City Councilwomen Linda Thompson and Patty Kim.

Topics will include:

- City-wide Clean-Up Initiative on April 22nd
- Adopt-A-Block Program
- Community Garden
- Dog Park
- Citizens Police Academy
- Court Watch Programs

For more information, please contact Jennifer Storm at jen@friendsofmitown.org.

Federal Courthouse update

Last month, the US General Services Administration (GSA) released a draft of the Environmental Assessment (EA) Study, which assesses the social, economic and environmental impacts of developing the three sites under consideration for the new Federal Courthouse in Harrisburg, PA. Copies available at Dauphin County Libraries in Uptown and Downtown Harrisburg.

BAGAL continued

ing to sexual orientation within corporate America and within local and regional businesses.

"NGLCC is the only national not-for-profit advocacy organization specifically dedicated to the expansion of economic opportunities and advancements of the LGBT community," Nelson said. For example, the federal government recognizes NGLCC exclusively for the certification of glbt businesses when dealing with government procurement policies.

The importance of an organization like NGLCC was further underscored on June 20, 2005, when NGLCC became the first glbt organization to ring the bell at the New York Stock Exchange.

Currently, BAGAL is considering an affiliation with NGLCC in an effort to better serve its members and the community. As an affiliate, BAGAL members would have access to resources available through NGLCC and would essentially function as a local Chamber of Commerce for the glbt community.

At their next meeting, BAGAL will hear from the Human Rights Campaign (HRC). The meeting is Wednesday, May 17, 6:30 – 8:30 PM at the Best Western Inn and Suites, 815 South Eisenhower Blvd. (bestwesternharrisburg.com).

Anyone interested in attending, contact Russ Boggs at russhbg@earthlink.net.

BAGAL is a South Central Pennsylvania association of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender professional and business people offering networking, educational, social, and community building opportunities for its members and supporters.

Gay Pride Parade continued

applications after that date.

AC: Can individuals not affiliated with a group march by themselves?

DS: Unfortunately, we will not offer a venue for individuals to march alone. The reason is simple: When you march with a group or organization your group will be responsible for your actions and what you present in the parade. All participating gropus and their leaders will be required to sign affidavits stating they will be responsible for their group's actions or presentation. This is one way we can insure that there will be no vulgarity or nudity during the event.

AC: Are there any parting words to share with the community?

DS: First, I thank the PrideFest Committee for giving me the honor of chairing our first parade. When I initially approached the committee with the idea of unifying our community through a parade, Pride Treasurer Marc Rigel encouraged me, and reminded me to start small. We hope to plant seeds of unity through a parade.

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A Tax Loop-hold for GLBT Taxpayers?

By Derek J. Cordier, Esquire

I recently learned of an interesting loop-hole in the tax law that may help glbt taxpayers. If you supporting your partner or caring for someone who is ill and that person makes a minimal income, you may be able to claim them as a dependent. You may also be able claim yourself as head of household.

An example would be if one partner is in school or you are caring for someone who is ill and if they earn less than the threshold amount, which is the exemption amount for the particular tax year (Currently $3,250.00). Claiming such a dependent could save thousands in taxes.

To qualify for the "dependency exemption," the dependent would have to use the test for "qualifying relative." The person must reside with you the entire year as a member of your household, and the relationship "must not violate local law." A violation of local law, for example would include the instance where your partner is still married and it may violate local law to cohabitate with a married person. Further, the dependent may not claim themselves on their own tax return.

The rules for "head of household" state that to qualify for head of household you must be unmarried on the last day of the year, you must pay more than half of the upkeep for the home for the year, and the "qualifying person" must live with you for more than half of the year. If you qualify for head of household, your tax rate will most likely be lower than if you file as a single and you may get a higher standard deduction.

I am not an accountant, so if you have any further questions, please refer to Publication 501, Exemptions, Standard Deductions, and Filing Information. The website is located at www.irs.gov/taxtopics/ or contact a tax professional.

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Financial Advice: How to Foil Identity Theft

By Maryanne Knaub
American Home Mortgage

Identity theft victimizes one in four households, so you need to know how to protect against the nation's fastest-growing crime. The FTC reports that 25% of identity theft cases involve a stolen credit card, wallet or Social Security card. Here's how to deter thieves:

Only print your first initial and last name on your personal checks. A thief will not know if you sign your checks with your initials or your first name, but your bank will know your signature.

Don't write your complete credit card account number on the "For" line of your check when paying a credit card bill. Instead, use the last four numbers to avoid a theft as it passes through the check-handling process.

Protect your identity by putting your work telephone number on your checks instead of your home telephone number. Use a P.O. Box or a work address instead of your home address.

Photocopy your wallet's contents, including your credit cards' toll-free numbers

Don't carry your Social Security card in your wallet or display the number so it can be copied.

If your credit cards are lost or stolen, immediately cancel them by calling the toll-free numbers you copied. If you know your card was stolen, it is recommended to file a police report in the jurisdiction where the card was taken. Call the national credit-reporting organizations to place a fraud alert on your name and Social Security number: Equifax: 1-800-525-6285; Experian: 1-888-397-3742; TransUnion: 1-800-680-7289; Social Security Administration (fraud line): 1-800-269-0271.

For further information and/or a a free debt assessment and mortgage consultation, Knaub can be reached at 717-612-5211; Cell 717-580-8868; Maryanne.knaub@americanhm.com.

Transgender Individuals Easily Misperceived

By Kristen Richards

Larry King from CNN's "Larry King Live," recently interviewed Felicity Huffman, the main character in "Transamerica." Huffman portrays a male to female (M2F) transsexual, someone who's gender identity is incongruent with their body.

King's show included a panel of gender incongruent guests who had genital reassignment surgery (GRS). King asked one his M2F guests, "regarding surgery, did you have your apparatus cut off?" A common misconception is the genitalia is cut off during GRS. Typical questions include: Are you having surgery to be with a man? Will you become lesbian after surgery? Will the new vagina work and can anyone buy a new vagina nowadays?

Medically defined, the Latin word for vagina is "sheath". A vagina is "a genital canal in the female, a sheath-like anatomical structure." A surgeon's GRS objectives in recreating nature's sheath-like masterpiece are as follows: The neo vagina replicates that of a genetic female - undetectable by a gynecologist, adequate vaginal dimensions to experience comfortable sex and orgasmic, sexual arousal and fulfillment. Carefully following your surgeon's pre/post-op GRS instructions, patients average a 90% success rate regarding full sensate and pleasure. Roughly 95%, overall, are happier and finally at peace with themselves following GRS.

Dr. Harry Benjamin, the German-born sexologist and early pioneer of gender studies, set strict guidelines called "Standards of Care" for the American Psychiatry Association to screen, assess and weed out candidates not suitable for surgery. GRS qualifications are recommendation letters from two mental health professionals,12 months of uninterrupted hormonal therapy and 12 months of continuous full time real life experience, working/living in your desired gender role, setting the foundation for successful transition

Anatomically changing genders, (M2F) vaginoplasty, involves a widely used surgical technique called "penile inversion." The testicles are removed. Skin from the foreskin and penis are inverted. Blood and nerve supplies are preserved to form a fully sensate vagina. Pubic hair is removed from the scrotal tissue and incorporated within the vagina The new clitoris is provided with nerve endings created from the tip of the penis to ensure sensation and pleasure, a magnitude comparable to genetic women. Optional labiaplasty, forming the labia minora and majora, requires using remaining parts of the scrotal tissue.

For clarity purposes and clearing up the muddle, it's important to keep gender and sexual preference separate. Strict guidelines are set to carefully screen to ensure successful crossover. Gender preference is unrelated to sexual preference. People do not "turn lesbian" or "do this to be with men" after GRS. They may have liked women as biological men. Now, their bodies are congruent with gender identification and social presentation, complete, free to enjoy sexual relations with whom they are/always were attracted to, living up to societal labels kindly bestowed upon them. Nothing gets chopped or Bobbitted. It simply gets reused and reworked, correcting nature's mistake. The only remaining tangibles are a pair of items to potentially sell on Ebay.

May

7th - Miss State Street Pageant - 8:30 P.M. Benefiting Gay Pride Entertainment.
See Bartenders For Application
19th - Graduation Party For Dr. Vince - P.M. Till???

21st - Gay Pride Benefit Show With The Ladies of The Strawberry 9:00 P.M.

June

11th - Miss 704 Strawberry Pageant - 8:30 P.M.
See Bartenders For Application

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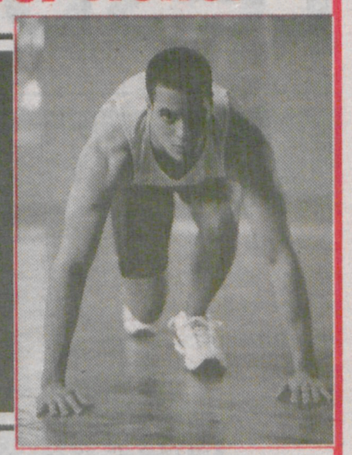

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Know Yourself – Take inventory of your finances. Calculate your assets – Cash, IRAs, mutual funds, annuities, real estate, life insurance – and your liabilities, like a mortgage or consumer debt and deferred income taxes on investments.

Start Saving Now – The first thing to do is take advantage of any employer match in any qualified savings program offered by your employer. Don't miss out on the "Triple Treat" of an initial tax deduction, matching employer contributions and tax-deferred earnings offered by most 401(k) or 403(b) plans.

Take Stock in the Market – Mutual funds can be a great way to get started in the stock market. Also, if you choose a fund(s), plan to stick with it for a while. Remember, even the best financial pros. Have trouble timing the market.

Curb Your Credit Cards – If your total monthly debt payments (excluding your mortgage payments) are 20% or more of your monthly take-home pay, you're probably overextended.

Be Wise with Windfalls – If you come up with a significant lump sum – a bonus, an inheritance, or maybe even a mid-sized lottery win – try to resist the urge to buy the hot sports car you've always dreamed of. Rather, invest those monies to catch up or get ahead in you your retirement savings.

Keep Current – Financial markets are a dynamic, fluid environment. Make it imperative that you carefully review your strategy every year or so, preferable with your financial services professional. Naturally, your review should be rigorous and disciplined, just like an successful game plan.

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HeartStrong: Marc Adams Reaches Out

By Sharon Muzio, Owner
Alta View Wellness Center

Do you remember what it was like to be a twenty-something in the closet? If you never were, good for you!

What about the many young people who are creatively hiding their truth just to fit in?

Now let's imagine these same young people in an oppressive environment, such as a fundamentalist religious college, where their sexual orientation is considered a sin.

According to the US Department of Education, there are approximately 7.5 million students attending religious educational institutions in the US alone. Let's assume 10 percent are glbt, that's 750,000 people. It is legal for religious educational institutions to conduct witch-hunts, harass, out and expel students that are suspected of or actually are glbt.

Our government usually doesn't get involved with regulating the practices of these schools or the discrimination they target towards gay students. Schools have the right to set moral standards and are free to determine those standards. Basically it's a free will decision to attend a religious school, so our government can't really do much to stop the manner in which harassment is directed at glbt students.

Often these students have nowhere to turn. At home their sexuality would be considered a major sin. At school they are warned of the ways that homosexual behavior will put them on a path to hell.

Marc Adams was once one of those students. During a recent lecture at Carlisle's Dickinson University, Adams explained how difficult it is for these young people to be themselves.

Adams spoke of kids who are made to partake in "Reparative Therapy or exgay" programs to "fix" themselves. According to an interview on his website (www.meetmarcadams.com), he says "some students in reparative therapy now are enduring 'treatments' that border on torture and abuse, such as forcing men to look at gay pornography and administering electric shocks when they get aroused."

"The reason you go into it (Reparative Therapy) is that you've been brainwashed to need to make your life acceptable to God," says Adams, who wrote about his struggles at Liberty and in the ex-gay movement in his 1996 memoir "The Preacher's Son," which was a Lambda Literary Award finalist.

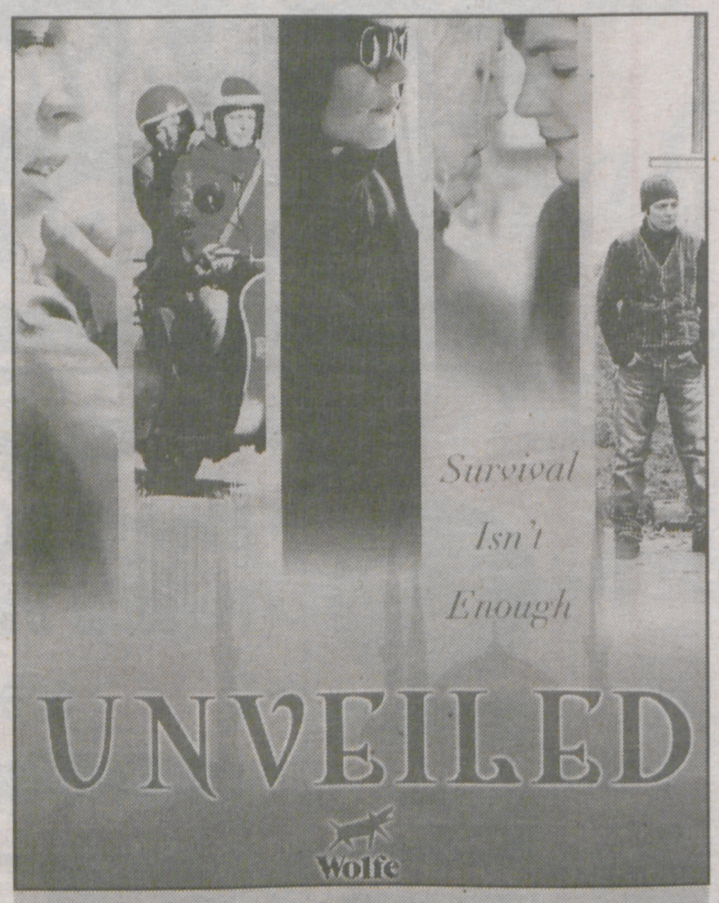
Adams is from Shavertown, PA. He is the son of a fundamentalist minister who knows all to well what its like to be persecuted by his educators and his family. His parents shunned him because, by being gay, he represents everything they are against Adams has the ability to put to

continued on page 27

Lesbian DVDs Hit the Market

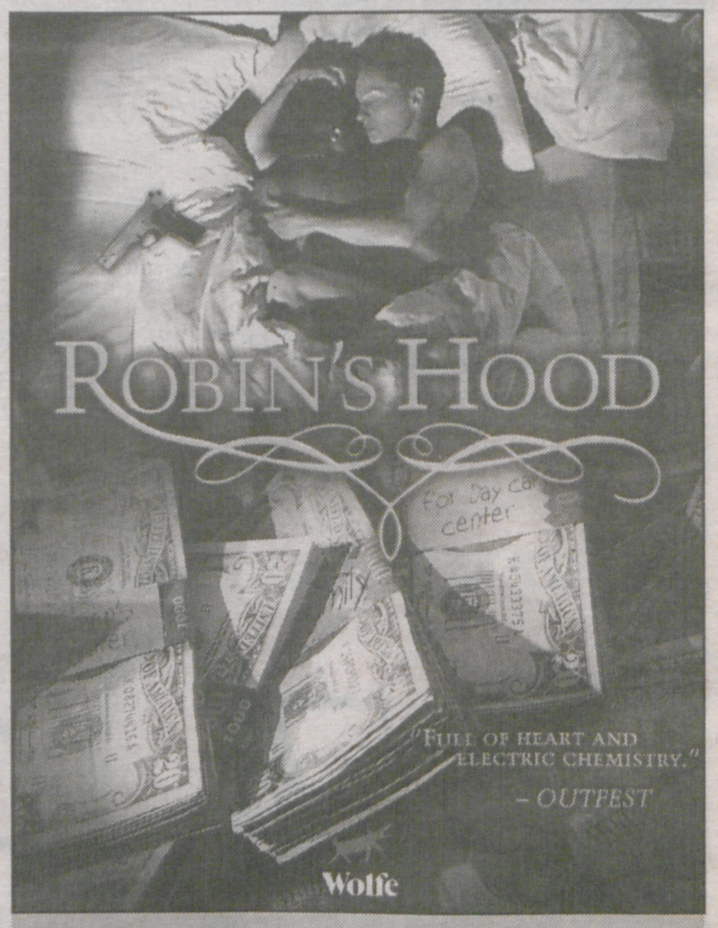
ULTIMATE

The short film collection THE ULTIMATE LESBIAN SHORT FILM FESTIVAL includes 10 amazing new shorts by, for, and about lesbians.



UNVEILED

A heartbreaking drama about the status of lesbians living under religious oppression and one woman's valient efforts to free herself. When the plane lands in Germany, a character applies for political refugee status and is transferred to a holding camp near the airport. When the German authorities determine that Fariba fled because she is a lesbian, the decision is made to deport her.



ROBIN'S HOOD

A hip-hop rework of the classic "rob from the rich, give to the poor" fable.

In this stylish re-visioning of the classic 'rob from the rich and give to the poor' myth, the streets and back alleys of Oakland provide the backdrop for up and coming dyke director Sara Millman's energetic tale. Like a lesbian Bonnie and Clyde.

CINEMA CENTER

www.cinemacenter.com

Here's the skinny on what Hollywood has in store for the big screen during March and April.

Kick off the summer with adventure movies.

Mission Impossible III

Tom Cruise is back as special Agent Ethan Hunt. His covert operations are described as "the mission of his life". Philip Seymour Hoffman shows off his academy award winning talent, along with Laurence Fishburne, Michelle Monaghan and Ving Rhames, a cast sure to generate action and suspense. J.J. Abrams, who created the TV shows "Lost" and "Alias" scripts, shows off his directorial debut with this action packed film. A sure bet for May 5 releases.

Poseidon

A luxury cruise ship capsized by a rouge wave in the middle of the North Atlantic Ocean. A small group of survivors are determined to fight their way to the surface, through a disorienting maze of twisted steel in the upside down wreckage. As the vessel rapidly fills with water each person must draw on skills and strengths they did not know they possessed, fighting against time and for their own survival and for each other. Stars; Josh Lucas, Kurt Russell, Emmy Rossum, Mia Maestro, and Mike Vogel. Directed by Wolfgang Peterson. May 12 release.

The DaVinci Code

Director Ron Howard reunites with Tom Hanks for this thriller, an adaptation of Dan Brown's best selling novel, in which the murder of a curator at the Louvre reveals a sinister plot to uncover a secret that has been protected since the days of Christ. The clues, hidden in the works oft Leonardo Da Vinci, visible for all to see but ingeniously disguised by the painter. Suspense grows as the search for the killer and the stunning secret of the ages the dead man was charged to protect. May 19

Over the Hedge

An animated comedy sure to please all ages. As the forest animals wake up from their long winters nap, they discover that a tall green thing has cropped up through he middle of their home. A hedge. RJ the Raccoon explains that the world beyond the hedge is "the gateway to the good life", where humans live to eat rather than eat to live. Unlikely friendships are formed as they learn to coexist with- and even exploit- the strange new world called suburbia. Outstanding voice cast includes, Bruce Willis, Gary Shandling, Steve Carell, William Shatner, Avril Lavigne, Nick Nolte, and Tin Johnson. May 19 release date.

May 26-28

Women's Weekend of Drumming & Singing

What's it take to bring women? A women's drumming workshop weekend led by award-winning percussionist and visionary Ubaka Hill May 26-28.

Ubaka Hill's magical ability makes everyone feel comfortable and united. The weekend is about the Sound of Sisterhood – Vibration that summons the spirit of many to align and unite as one.

For the sixth year running, women from the mid-Atlantic region will gather in Harrisburg for this weekend of workshops, sponsored by Women,Create! (formerly the Center for Women's Creative Expression).

Ubaka Hill brings her intensive and inspiring drum workshop, Drumsong: The Art and Spirit of Drumming, from May 26-28. In a separate workshop May 24, Mosa Baczewska, nationally known performing songwriter, musician, and artist, will guide women through personal explorations of the voice as a means for moving beyond limitations.

During this exploration of sound, it is also Hill's unique ability to enable harmony on many levels that inspires the culminating event of the weekend – a concert performance by Ubaka Hill and the Harrisburg Drumsong Orchestra – made up totally of workshop participants, ranging from those who have never held a drum before, to those with professional experience. This performance, scheduled for Sunday, May 28, 3 pm, is part of Harrisburg ArtsFest, held at Riverfront Park.

The deadline to register is May 18. A $10 fee applies for all registrations after May 18. Call 717-238-6244 and leave a message.

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Dear Dot Cleans Out Closet

Dear Dot:

I've been in a committed relationship with my boyfriend for two years. We get along fine, but there's one part of "us" that really bugs me. To his family and co-workers, I'm his "roommate." Does the closet ever end? I feel like I'm losing respect for him because he cares more about what other people think than how I feel.

Signed,
Kept in the Closet

***

Dear Kept:

In short, no, the closet door never ends. The closet door seems to open and close over and over. Each time we meet new people or find ourselves in new situations, the decision is made: Shall I come out? Shall I let assumptions be made? Shall I wait to see what questions are asked, if any? Should I censor my behavior in order to shield my identity until I feel safe enough to be who I am?

Some of us come out of the closet in grand fashion and vow never to close the closet door again.

"We here, we're queer!" we chant. Others open the door cautiously and choose to close it just as fast depending on the circumstances.

You are not alone as a gay couple in dealing with this circumstance. Most couples negotiate this issue several times in their relationship, especially as levels of commitment evolve and/or social or employment situations change. Clear and caring communication is the key.

You seem to feel his use of the label "roommate" is a denial of your relationship. It's a safe label that might mean a variety of things. If you are losing respect for him over this, your sense of being "bugged" will likely intensify unless you are able renegotiate how you introduce yourselves.

You might ask what his concerns are and what he wants to accomplish by using this safe label. Perhaps you can agree together about when you will be specific about your relationship and when you will be protective of yourselves.

His discomfort might signal ambivalence about the relationship or about his own gay/bisexual identity. You both might

continued on page 29

DVD-fest!

Celebrate Marilyn Monroe's 80th Birthday

By John DiLeo

June 1 marks what would have been Marilyn Monroe's 80th birthday. Having died at 36 in 1962, Marilyn is better remembered as a forever-young sex-symbol icon than as a uniquely gifted screen actress.

Below are five films - minus her best, Some Like It Hot - to consider for a DVD birthday celebration of her enduringly vibrant stardom.

Gentlemen Prefer Blondes (1953)

This is the one that made Marilyn a major star. An enjoyable ocean-voyage romp, it's garishly colored and altogether silly, sort of like watching a live-action comic book.

Directed by a slumming Howard Hawks, this adaptation of the Broadway musical has some good tunes, though its musical numbers are hardly first-rate. What really puts it over is Marilyn herself. As Lorelei, the "dumb blonde" who is kittenishly ruthless where millionaires and jewelry are concerned, Marilyn is as funny as she is gorgeous.

"Diamonds Are a Girl's Best Friend" isn't really a very good sequence, yet Marilyn infuses it with such confidence, magnetism, and sexual vitality that she turns an ugly production number into a classic.

You have to hand it to no-nonsense costar Jane Russell for being such a good sport about Marilyn hijacking the movie. Uninterested in money, Russell headlines "Anyone Here for Love?" the gayest number from Hollywood's musical heyday. To Jack Cole's choreography, she tries to cavort with male Olympic athletes working out in the ship's gym. Clad in high-riding, flesh-colored bathing suits, the boys are clearly more interested in themselves and each other than in Russell. But aside from the grinding rear ends and generous crotch shots of these gym bunnies, men barely figure in this tale of two enterprising females with the drive and imagination to go after whatever they want.

How to Marry a Millionaire (1953)

It was already an age-old formula - three gold diggers pooling their resources to nab wealthy spouses - but rarely has it been done so charismatically. The sexual politics are dated, yet it's still a highly entertaining comedy sparked not just by Marilyn but by likable Betty Grable and a chic, wisecracking Lauren Bacall.

Marilyn plays a virtually blind bombshell whose vanity prevents her from wearing her eyeglasses, prompting top-notch physical comedy of her walking into walls, tripping on steps, even taking off her glasses to answer the phone (in case it's a man). Adorably vacant, Marilyn uses her character's insecurities to bring warmth and charm to her acting. Paired with ordinary-looking David Wayne, an expert underplayer, she formed an unexpectedly delightful partnership.

If the movie seems oddly obsessed with showing off its rectangular shape, that's because it was the second CinemaScope movie ever made and 20th Century-Fox was overselling the process to audiences. The major fun of this modest yet bright flick derives from the gals' camaraderie and in watching them find true love in spite of themselves.

River of No Return (1954)

Marilyn's only "family film" is a rugged adventure, a scenic wide-screen travelogue set in the Northwest. In her first dramatic role since becoming a star, Marilyn looks sensational as a hard-bitten saloon singer but her been-around persona feels effortful and phony. She becomes involved with an ex-con farmer (Robert Mitchum) and his motherless boy (Tommy Rettig), and they're all soon heading down the rapids to avoid pursuing Indians.

Stoic and laconically sexy, the underrated Mitchum makes an ideal frontiersman, and he suggests depths of character nowhere apparent in the rudimentary script. His ease only highlights Marilyn's discomfort. Even so, she does warble four tunes quite lusciously. Director Otto Preminger delivers an old-time movie-movie, a rousing Saturday-matinee entertainment. Marilyn wasn't yet seasoned enough to flesh out her stock role, but, don't worry, Bus Stop was only two years away.

Bus Stop (1956)

Fresh from her sojourn at the Actors Studio, Marilyn gave her finest performance in this adaptation of gay playwright William Inge's Broadway hit. Her Cherie may be another voluptuous dumb blonde yet she has enough self-awareness to try to turn her sorry life around. Replacing her usual breathy delivery with a tangy Ozarks twang, Marilyn gives the screen's most accomplished portrait of a no-talent performer. Her rendition of "That Old Black Magic," in a Phoenix saloon, is hilariously mechanical and painfully earnest.

Playing the comedy straight, she manages to be both ingeniously funny and achingly touching. Against her will, Cherie is literally carried away by Bo (Don Murray), a hunky cowboy, on a Montana-bound bus. Waylaid by a blizzard and stranded at a diner, Cherie and Bo get to know each other. Bruised and craving tenderness, Marilyn's Cherie yearns deeply to be not just desired but loved. Bus Stop is a slender piece, but it's quite a showcase for its two leads.

Among the Academy's more boneheaded omissions was its failure to recognize Marilyn's rapturous achievement with even a nomination (though Murray got a supporting nod).

continued on page 34

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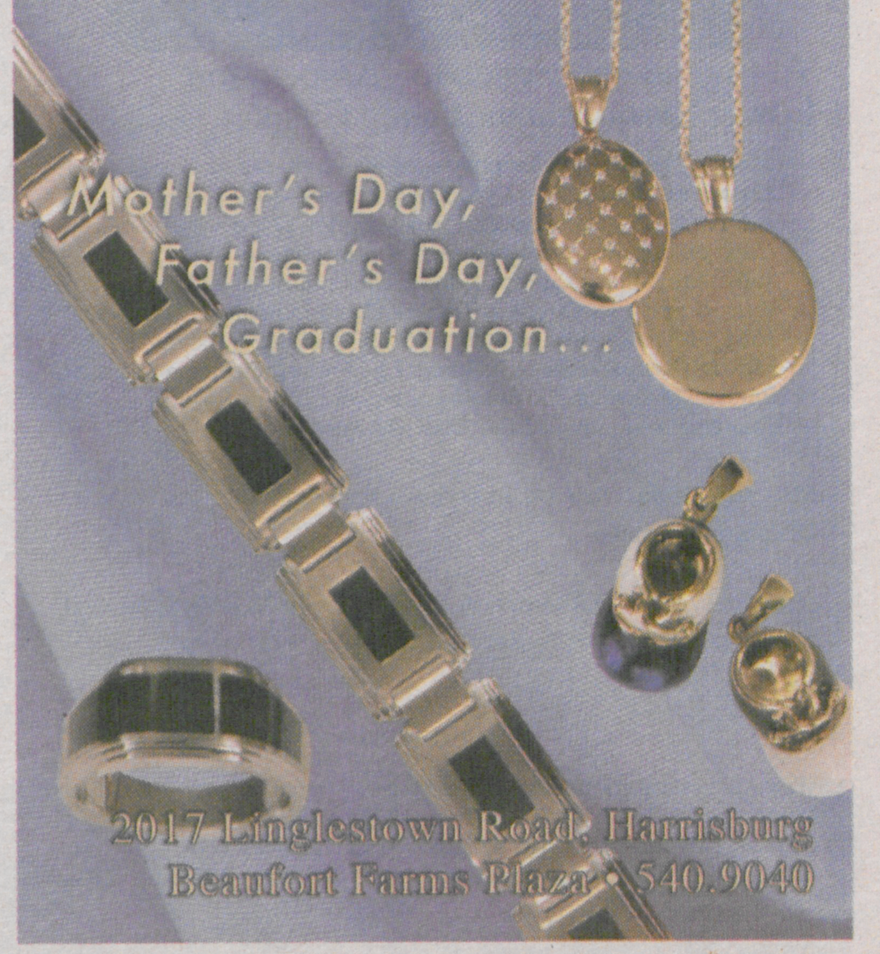

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Milford & Pike County Guide

Alternative Central May - June 2006

Milford: Prettiest County Seat in America Says Atlantic Magazine

Winnie McCroy, NYC Correspondent

Exactly 75 miles from the Lincoln Tunnel, Milford, Pike County, has been has been called "the prettiest county seat in America" by *Atlantic Magazine*. Several of the greatest architects of the 19th century have examples of their work in the village.

Grey Towers is the Pinchot home designed by Richard Morris Hunt and now a National Historic Landmark operated by the US Forest Service. Calvert Vaux designed Milford's old post office, which is now a gallery.

Hunt & Hunt, the sons of Richard Morris Hunt designed Forest Hall as the summer school for Yale University School of Forestry and Frederick Law Olmsted designed part of the Milford Cemetery.

Private residences in the area include work by McKim, Mead and White. Frank Lloyd Wright-inspired Usonian homes and stunning examples of 19th century vernacular architecture.

In the early part of the 20th century, Pike County was a location for many silent films, including those starring the Gish sisters. Lionel Barrymore and Mary Pickford. D.W. Griffith directed two of his first films here. Each fall the Black Bear Film Festival is held in Milford, organized by film aficionados and industry professionals who live in the area.

Presidents Theodore and Franklin Roosevelt, John E Kennedy. Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman. Sarah Bernhardt, Ogden Nash, Robert Frost and many others vacationed or visited the area. Zane Grey lived and wrote in Pike County: today his home is a museum New York Tribune Editor Horace Greeley's Sylvanian Colony - a utopian community associated with the mid-19th century "free love" movement - was founded in Pike County.

Philosopher Charles Peirce - the founder of pragmatism built his estate in Westfall Township. just outside of Milford, also in an effort to create a utopian community. Peirce's papers are housed at The Columns Museum, operated by the Pike County Historical Society. The Columns' most famous artifact is the "bloody Lincoln Flag.' upon which the dying President's head rested after he was shot.

About 40 percent of Pike County is state or federal forest, park or gameland. Milford itself is the north gate to the Delaware Water Gap National Recreation Area, a 70,000-acre National Park.

The Black Walnut Inn

For those seeking a B&B type getaway, The Black Walnut Inn is a cozy, 12-room farmhouse on a wooded estate not far from I-84. Host William Jara and his wife have run the charming country inn since his father-in-law purchased it in 1982, gutted and rebuilt the house, and opened it as a B&B in 1985.

The property features six ponds, including a four-acre catch-and-release pond, plus natural springs. The Inn is popular among New York and New Jersey horse owners, who can board their animal here, and ride on the Inn's 162 acres of land, or in the adjacent Delaware National Forest, which has thousands of acres of trails.

Kids love the Inn's farm animal petting zoo, which includes goats, sheep, chickens, turkeys, geese, rabbits, burros, horses and ponies. Parents often stay at The Black Walnut Inn to visit their children at local summer camps. Whether you're a weekender or newlyweds, Jara said he is dedicated to making sure your stay is perfect.

"Just like every other place in Milford, we will refer people to others' facilities because we know we're not losing business, just helping people be happy," said Jara. "If they want a more hotel style experience, or don't want to be in with kids, we'll refer them to other places. But we're actually pretty open to anyone. At the moment there are not a lot of gay and lesbian visitors—most of the clientele are families and newlyweds…but we are gay friendly."

Jara said when he and his wife lived in Seattle, they had "friends of all kinds, which helped us broaden our horizons." They were also active in the deaf community, and have taken steps to develop services for deaf and handicapped people in the Pike County area. Jara said many deaf people and groups stay at the Black Walnut Inn, where they have a TTY machine, and know American Sign Language.

Jara also said he has just gotten approval to construct another 20 rooms for handicapped and elderly customers—ground floor units that are a little bigger, to accommodate wheelchairs. According to him, this will bring the number of handicapped accessible rooms in the area up 600 percent, from the three rooms currently available.

People appreciate the ability to bond with Mother Nature. This also makes the Inn's rustic cabin, just a five-minute walk from the main house, popular, because "people feel as if they're really in the woods."

Still, they make their way to the main house for the Inn's full country breakfast, featuring pancakes, French toast, sausage, bacon, home fries, and eggs. They will also accommodate those with dietary restrictions. Jara said people appreciate these personal touches, like the cookies and cocoa served nightly in front of a roaring fire, which he said was popular "especially in winter when there is snow outside and the fire is crackling and so beautiful—you can't beat it."

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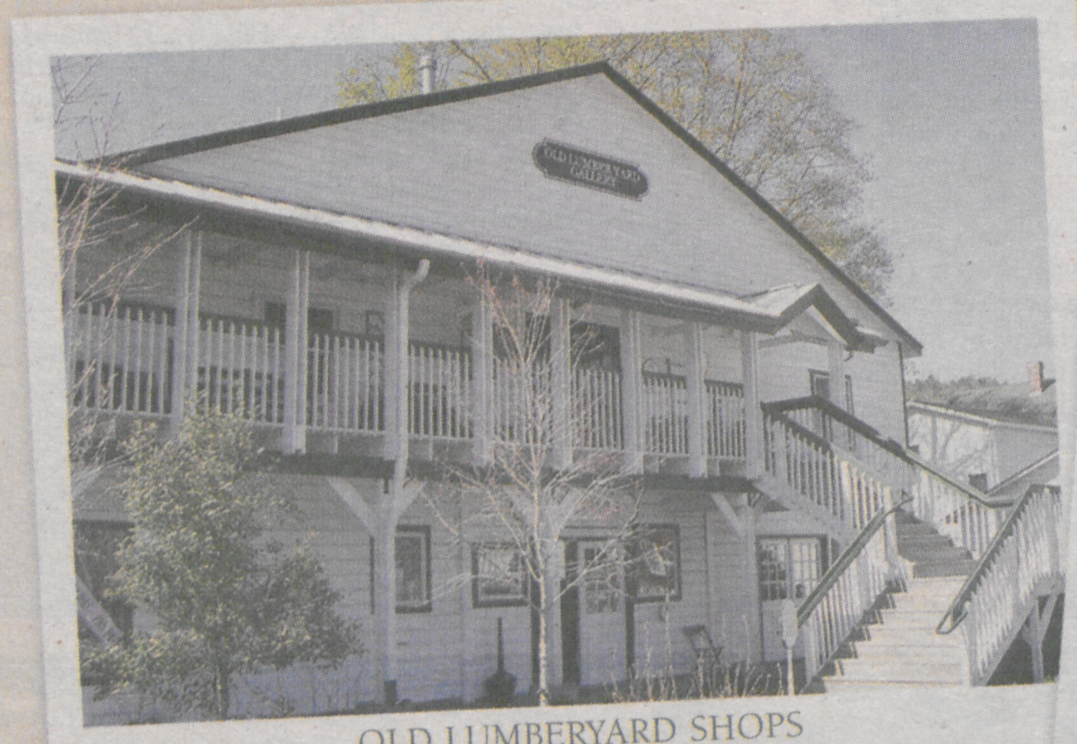

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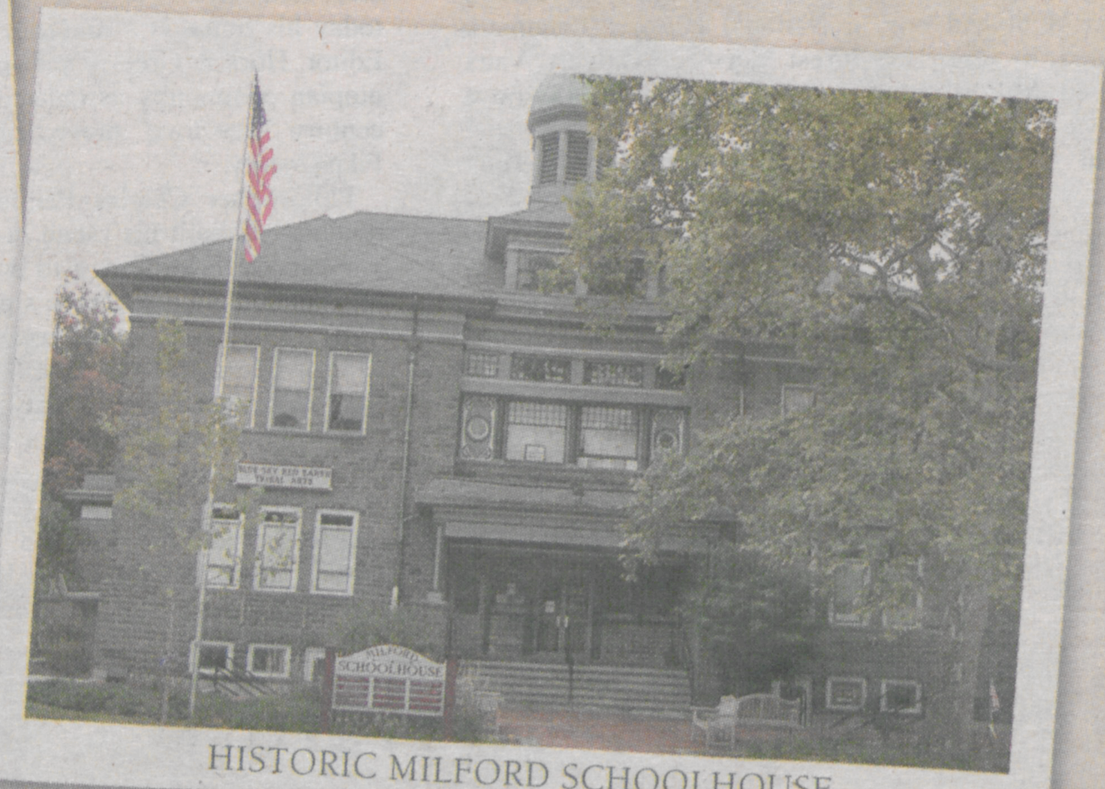

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John DiLeo

In Love with Movies & Milford

"I'm such a city person. I never thought I'd to want to spend so much time in a small town when my partner bought a house in Milford, but I unexpectedly fell in love with the town, the house, the garden, and wonderful new friends," says Brooklyn-born author John DiLeo. He and partner Earl McCarroll, a retired college professor from Ithaca, have been together 24 years and have shared a 1920 home in Milford's historic district for five years.

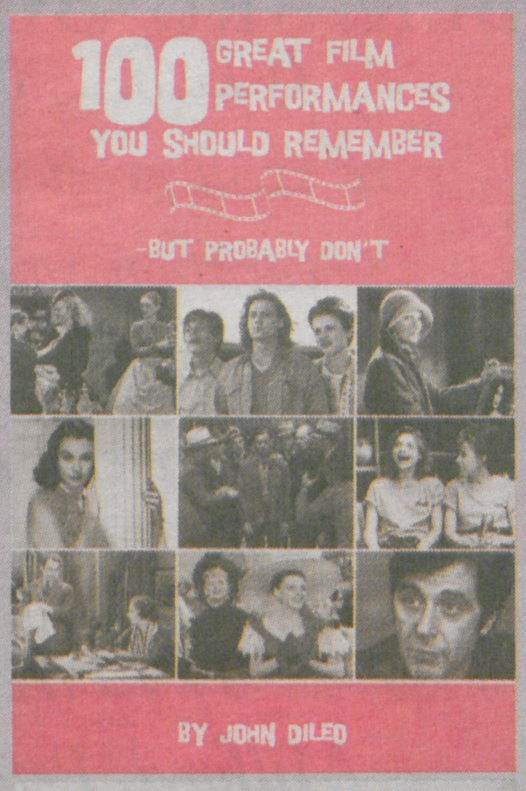
DiLeo's first book, "And You Thought You Knew Classic Movies!" was published in 1999 by St. Martin's Press. Film-critic giant Pauline Kael hailed it "the smartest movie quiz book I've ever seen."

DiLeo, 45, is best known for his second book, "100 Great Film Performances You Should Remember But Probably Don't," published in 2002. Screenwriting legend Adolph Green called it "a valuable and touching work." Currently, DiLeo is a contributing book reviewer for the Washington Post and the DVD reviewer for Milford Magazine.

"As a freelance writer, I'm not chained to a desk somewhere. Milford is a pretty amazing place in which to write," DiLeo says of the idyllic setting. From the 1950s through the 1970s, science fiction writers—Kurt Vonnegut, L. Ron Hubbard, Ursula K. Le Quin—all wrote there. "I've always been a movie buff so it was a natural transition, when I was 35, from stage acting to writing books about what I love," he says.

DiLeo has hosted a film series at Manhattan's gay-and-lesbian bookstore "A Different Light" and been an annual participant in Milford's popular and growing Black Bear Film Festival, where he has conducted seminars on film history. Last year, he interviewed Farley Granger on the festival stage.

DiLeo's website is johndileo.com.



Blue Sky Red Earth Tribal Arts

Further down on Harford Street sits the old schoolhouse building, where Stella Evans from Blue Sky Red Earth Tribal Arts invited us to peruse the wide variety of Native American jewelry, clothing and art. Andrea Filone, our host at Mt. Haven Resort, remembered attending first and second grade at this charming stone schoolhouse, which now also houses the Milford Magazine offices, Joey's Pizza and the Drivers' License Bureau.

Evans has Blackfoot and Lakota in her family tree, as well as European and Central Asian—among her ancestors is a Mongolian chieftain. Evans says that a connection to Native American heritage "Has always been there, in my heart. I don't know how it evolved, but I went to every gathering or pow-wow or festival I could, and I went out west when I was very young on a cross-country trip in the '60s that kind of solidified this feeling." Evans said that when she decided to start the business in 1999, she "had a vision of how it would look… and it was so unusual how it all evolved." Other places were available, but Evans went right to the schoolhouse and the fit was perfect. The same happened when she looked for display cases, and decided on a store plan. "It all just found its own niche within this whole space," she said. "The experience was very organic."

Blue Sky Red Earth sells a variety of Native American goods, largely from the Northern Plains Indians as opposed to the Southwest tribes."We have artists who have an interest and do their homework, and I get a lot of enjoyment in explaining who these people are," said Evans. "Our people have also been known internationally, like the Lakota and Blackfoot silver and beadwork."

Although she sells turquoise because of the high customer demand, Evans focuses largely on beadwork and quillwork featuring buffaloes, ponies, and eagles, popular totems. She also carries reproductions of Lakota weapons, medicine shields, knife sheaths, lances and dance sticks, plus sage from South Dakota. Evans also does good business in flutes, drums, rattles, star quills, painted hides, and said, "we even have one person who does incredible buffalo robes—he's done work for Jane Fonda and Waylan Jennings."

Evans celebrates the ancient culture of the Northern Plains Indians, and is happy she can help them continue their tradition."What we have here is truly one of kind—I get it from the Lakota people; I deal one on one with the people. That's why it's extra special," said Evans. "The whole idea is to keep up the tradition, and to keep the money circulating so people can get sense of worth in keeping up these traditions." 201 W. Harford St., 570-409-1826.

Forest Hall Antiques

Partners Reggie Cheong-Leen and Peter Spielhagen bought Forest Hall Antiques almost 20 years ago, when, as Cheong-Leen recalls, "the only other gay couple we knew were Jim and Gerry, who had just bought the Dimmick Inn diagonally across from our building. Now we know many gay couples who have weekend homes, or even live out here full time." The second-floor gallery of Forest Hall Antiques is 4,000 feet of furniture, a chock-a-block antiquers delight. The pair doesn't specialize in any one type of antique, but rather, as Cheong-Leen puts it, "deals in all of it, in one-of-a-kind pieces."Spielhagen emigrated from Germany when he was 15 years old, and Cheong-Leen hails from Hong-Kong. The two import Chinese antiques from Hong Kong and are expecting their next container of goods to be shipped in May. And, although they recently visited Spielhagen's family in Germany, Cheong-Leen said searching for antiques there wasn't in their plans, as "the Euro is too strong. We can't buy antiques in Germany, because they're too expensive."

The building in which Forest Hall Antiques is housed is among the oldest in town, listed in the National Historic Registry, and the couple is celebrating its 100th anniversary this year. To help keep locals tuned into Milford's art scene, the couple participates in the town's "Art After Dark" events.They rent out the bottom of this historic stone building to a beauty shop, frame shop, art gallery and high-end knitting shop, plus Upriver Home Antiques, where Kevin can help you find modern home décor. At the end of their parking lot, the couple has two separate small buildings, which house a jewelry shop and a clothing shop. Spielhagen and Cheong-Leen are currently renovating, repainting and landscaping this parking lot. They are also working on updating their web site, so that potential customers can peruse the offerings before they travel to the shop.Forest Hall Antiques, 214 Broad St., 570-296-4299. www.foresthallantiques.com.

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70 NW International Photography Gallery and Education Center

In the modern building situated next door to Forest Hill Antiques, Patrick T. Sellitto exhibits and sells the work of local avant-garde and contemporary photographers at 70NW International Photography Gallery and Education Center. This membership organization uses the financial support of photographers, friends of the gallery, and corporate sponsors to promote artists' work both in Milford, and around the world through satellite exhibitions.The gallery participates in a special "Art After Dark" event on the second Saturday of every month, where downtown Milford galleries host openings from 6-9 p.m., with a reception for new artists. This month, the work of Israeli-born and –raised artist Talli Rosner-Kozuch probes the "Inner State of Mind." Rosner-Kozuch studied at the Bezalel Art & Design Academy in Jerusalem, and taught at both the Musrara School of Media and Photography in Jerusalem and at her alma mater, Bezalel. For her, the best part of teaching was seeing the students "fall in love with photography and getting 'high' from it, building their own darkroom and seeing them fly to this new world with so much enthusiasm."

Rosner-Kozuch photographs at night, often by candlelight, and uses gelatin silver prints, platinum prints and photo etchings to express the "internal state of mind," as she sees it. Her goal is to present her work as a product of the subconscious. Her latest work is taken from a visit to Mexico, where she completed a special collection regarding the Day of the Dead. Rosner-Kozuch also focuses on documenting the role of women around the world; her exhibited photo "Juanna the Healer" from this exhibit is a perfect example of her passion. "I felt she was a great example of the women's role in Mexico. The Mayans and the Zapotec people left their impression and gave women the role of 'Healer Doctor,'" said Rosner-Kozuch. On November 18, the gallery will hold a its First Annual Live Auction of artists' works, to give art collectors the chance to increase their art collection and patronize both established and beginning art photographers. It's the perfect chance to get quality artwork at reasonable prices.

True to its name, 70NW International Photography Gallery and Education Center also offers classes to help members expand their level of expertise. In March, the gallery hosted a free Photoshop Discussion Group with Randall FitzGerald, to evaluate people's skill sets and create a customized Photoshop workshop to cater to the specific needs of their artists.

And, like any good community arts organization, 70NW is taking the lead in putting their name on the map. Through meetings of the Tri-State Artists and Arts Organizations of Wayne/Pike/Sussex/Orange/Sullivan Counties, the gallery is helping to find ways to promote the Delaware River Highlands as an arts destination. They are also looking to the future by training high school students to become photographic artists through PLATO, the Photographic Learning & Artist Training Opportunity. 70NW International Photography Gallery And Education Center, 224 Broad St. 570-296-6789 or www.70NW.org

Work's Frame Shop/Milford Therapeutic Massage

Frame shop owner Jean Work and her partner, massage therapist Nancy Isola, have lived in Milford for almost eight years. Work said, "We started camping in the area, and found people who lived here to be very friendly, and we started looking for property. It was a total shift, because when we moved out here we had no idea that the area was gay friendly. But Sean was instrumental in marketing the place as gay friendly, and brought a lot of people to the area." Isola helps Pike County locals ditch their stress with Swedish, Medical, or Deep Tissue Therapy massages at Milford Therapeutic Massage. Isola is a graduate of the Pennsylvania Learning Institute and a Professional Massage Therapist whose specialties include medical massage, chair massage and reflexology. She helps clients relieve stress and soothe the nervous system, improve circulation and posture, and ease conditions from tension headaches and carpal tunnel syndrome, to the stresses of pregnancy. (311 W. Harford St., 570-296-5006, www.milfordmassage.com).

Work opened her frame shop after she realized that local artists and residents were taking their work to New York or New Jersey to be framed. Having attended The American Picture Framing Academy in Southington, CT, where she studied with master framers Paul Cascio and Rebecca Thompson, Work knew she could provide this service, to local if not visitors.

"Some people come to town for the art galleries, the one-too-many craft shops… but most people come for the river, great hiking tours, or a quick weekend getaway," said Work. Still, she believed the demand for quality framing was high enough to support her business. Operating out of the basement of their home, Work began to offer high quality, affordable custom framing with one-day service available on in-stock mouldings. Work offers a full line of Larson-Juhl and Studio Mouldings and carries acid free Crescent Select mat boards, and will ensure your satisfaction with a personal consultation. With the substantial discount to artists and home delivery, Work's Frame Shop has garnered a reputation for excellence. Work's framed wares are shown in Carolann's Linen Closet in town. To review Work's wares and framing options, visit www.worksframeshop.com, or call 570-686-5113.

The Milford Diner

The Milford Diner was a logical spot to stop for lunch upon arriving. Located right in the middle of town on Broad Street, it was a quick walk to hit many of Milford's famed antique shops.This charming, classic Greek diner with the bright yellow sign is the kind of place Hollywood location scouts dream about—cozy maroon booths, a low counter lined with spinning chrome stools, a display case full of delicious pastries and cakes. Best of all are the waitresses, like Sara, who are straight out of Mel's Diner—the kind who ask after your sick uncle, know that you like a side of mayo with your fries, and are themselves Milford institutions.

The Milford Diner sports the slogan, "Where good friends meet to eat," and it's one you can take to heart. If you're looking for a Pike County local, chances are they will turn up at the Diner before long. Teenage girls giggle over coffee and cigarettes in the two-person booths, while across the restaurant, families fill banquettes and try to keep Junior in his booster seat, eating his mac and cheese.

The expansive menu, customary for a Greek-style diner, offers everything from breakfast 20 ways to traditional fare like stuffed cabbage, beef goulash, and pork roast with sauerkraut and potato pancake. Best of all, the prices are so reasonable, it seems as if inflation never reached this Pennsylvania burg. The restaurant's web site even posts recipes for Greek favorites like spanikopita, baklava, and Tsoureki—a special Easter bread with a colored egg nestled in it. The rave customer reviews on the Diner's web site are testimony to this eateries' popularity—locals, summer residents, and visitors alike are smitten by The Milford Diner. Broad St., off Rte. 6 &209, 570-296-8611, www.milforddiner.com

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Mt. Haven Country Resort and Restaurant, outside of town on Log Tavern Road, is situated on more than 400 acres of land next to a horse farm on what used to be a former senator's country estate. The Filone family balances relaxing country vacationing with luxury, as seen in the many choices of private rooms with Jacuzzis and fireplaces.Whether you are interested in outdoor pursuits, like horseback riding, boating, fishing, water skiing, golfing, white-water rafting, skiing, or snow tubing, or if you are more interested in shopping at antique stores, flea markets, or factory outlets, Mt. Haven is conveniently located to indulge your recreational pursuits.

After a long day enjoying all that Pike County has to offer, it will be a relief to return to Mt. Haven's luxurious suites and cottages. The Filone family takes pride in extending personal attention to guests, and they will ensure that your surroundings match your needs, from a romantic VIP cottage to the perfect suite for your family getaway. For $315 a couple, enjoy the best romance can offer, including a complementary candlelight dinner, with live piano music in the background, at Mount Haven's famed restaurant.

Inside the Garden and Skylight Room, multiple fireplaces and wood stoves impart a cozy feel where you can indulge in the lavish Sunday brunch, which features a craft-your-own-omelet bar, breakfast meats including homemade sausage, Belgian waffles, a wide variety of pastries, fresh fruit, hash browns and more. Filone was hardly ragging when she said, "The food is outrageous! The restaurant seats 350 and people from as far as Kentucky come for repeat business. We are a big Italian family, and we feed you well." Filone, who is a wedding officiate, said that Mt. Haven has a huge old mansion perfect for weddings, and an enclosed gazebo perfect for smaller commitment ceremonies. Call early for reservations because the resort fills up quickly, but they can easily accommodate an entire wedding party and guests. www.mthavenresort.com, 800-553-1530,

Dimmick Inn & Steakhouse: You'll WANT to Stay Here

by Frank Pizzoli, Publisher

When visitors arrive at "ground zero" they're greeted by an intersection home to Dimmick Inn and Steakhouse on Harford Street. The charming establishment has served as a landmark since it opened in 1828. Co-owner Gerry Hansen was elected as an openly gay candidate of the County Commission.

Dinner at Dimmick is worth a trip to Milford. I was greeted by name when I arrived. Overnight rooms are situated on two floors above the main floor. Dinner guests can select from four dining rooms – two with working fireplaces – or from cozier seating arranged all around the bar area. The Inn is large, but it's varied spaces allow for different size parties.

At a nearby table, real estate agent Phyllis Simpson was telling a visiting couple, "We're a sleeping giant up here in Milford and Pike County." They immediately started asking about prices, patterns. "What's your dream? Simpson asked them.

As Beth approached my table off the corner of the bar – from where I could see almost everything going on – she shared the evenings' specials. It was so nice to dine in a place where staff acted like I was welcome.

The house Tomato Soup came with real oyster crackers. The chef's flounder was so tender and moist. The breadcrumbs on top – like mom makes – were crusty brown and glistened with fresh lemon juice. The mashed potatoes were double-baked the right way – they had bulk but the flavor was sealed in, help by a generous sprinkling of parsley. Steamed baby vegetables were the perfect match for the flounder. By my second after-dinner coffee, the first with Irish Whiskey, the second with Amaretto, I was ready to retire to my room. The preserved, historical charm of the establishment is plain as one climbs the stairs, although the Inn's bathrooms are modern. By morning, the intersection bustles with foot traffic along the nearby streets lined with antique shops, a coffeehouse, and a drug store. Everything visitors need for a great weekend jaunt. http://dimmickinn.com

Reasons to Visit Milford & Pike County

Milford is the County Seat of Pike County, first settled around 1733. The Town of Milford was officially founded in 1796. Many of the early arrivals and developers were most impressed with the unique beauty of the surroundings, particularly Milford's location on a bluff overlooking the Delaware River. Milford features historic architecture and fine homes along its tree-lined streets. A portion of the central business district has "National Historic Area" designation. Antique stores, crafts shops and a variety of boutiques line the main streets in the central area.

Pike County is the birthplace of the American Conservation Movement.

Science fiction writers in the 1950s through the 1970s – Kurt Vonnegut, Virginia Kidd, L. Ron Hubbard, Ursula K. Le Quin – all wrote there.

Milford is a "planned community" without having lost a bit of its charm and wilderness qualities. A circuit judge laid out the original plans. Including wide streets and ample, useable alleyways.

Black Bear Film Festival – www.blackbearfilm.com

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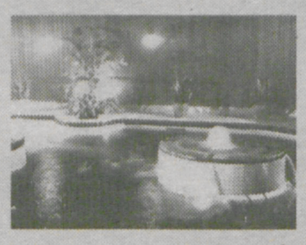

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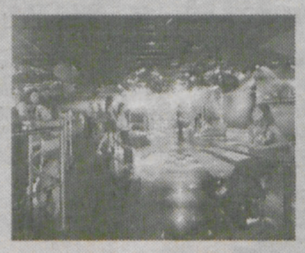

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H. Ric Luhrs Performing Arts Center

By Kristen Richards

What began as a vision a decade ago by former Shippensburg University's President Anthony Cedia, has become a reality. Shippensburg University held their dedication celebration and open house for the new H. Ric Luhrs Performing Arts Center and it's state of the art, 1,500 seat Grove Theatre.

After the ribbon cutting ceremony, and remarks by university and Pennsylvania state officials along with Grace B Luhrs, widow of H. Ric Luhrs, the ceremony was followed by internationally-esteemed Vienna Choir Boys.

Next, Lincoln Center Jazz Orchestra including Pulitzer Prize winner Wynton Marsalis "wowed" a sold out audience for Luhrs Center's initial curtain raising.

Luhrs Center's core mission - supporting and enhancing the university's role in academic and cultural enrichment for the people of the Commonwealth of PA while benefiting the region with expanded opportunities to participate in full-scale Broadway companies, national touring companies, internationally renowned performers and speakers, symphonies and dance troupes.

For further information and ordering tickets, call 717.477.SHOW (7469) or www.luhrscenter.com. Also, the visit the box office on Shippensburg University's Campus. Hours: Tuesday - Friday, 10 A.M. - 6 P.M. and Saturday, 10 A.M. - 3 P.M.

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Heartstrong continued

paper just what is was like be gay and live in an oppressive home, then attend an oppressive University.

Adams began outreach work to help these students, and spread the word in 1996; he then founded HeartStrong in 1998. HeartStrong is a 501(c) 3, national non-profit educational organization. Their mission statement includes educating the public to the persecution of GLBT and others attending religious educational institutions. HeartStrong is a non-sectarian organization reaching out to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students from religious educational institutions in grade svhool through graduate school.

HeartStrong offers help and hope to glbt students of religiously-based educational institutions which do not permit glbt students to fully express themselves socially, emotionally, romantically and spiritually. Adams explains, "Most of the students we help are in crisis situations where they are being expelled, punished, outed or worse. Our goal is to provide support for these students and make sure that they choose life both emotionally and physically."

The HeartStrong Outreach

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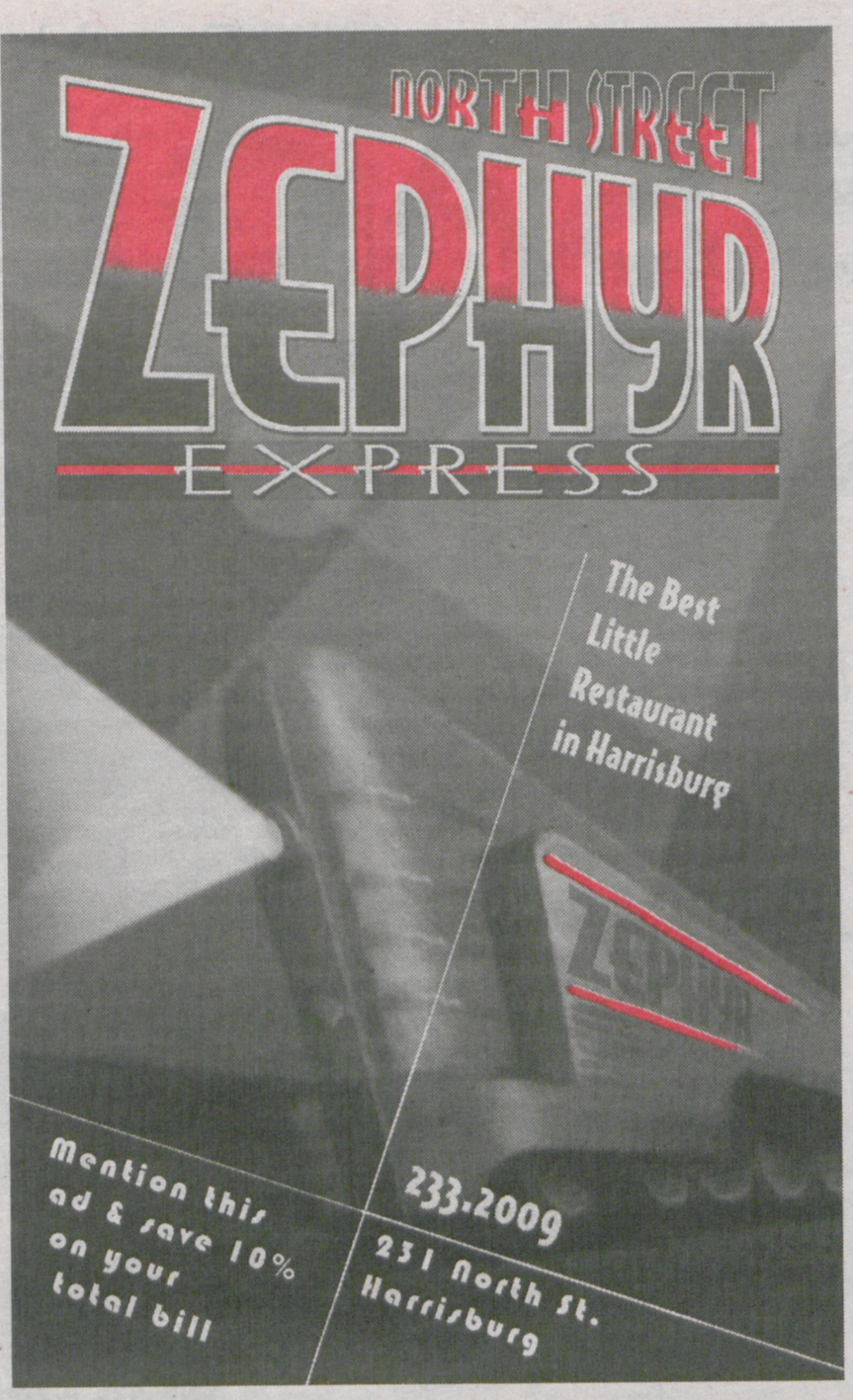

Theatre Roundup

Gamut Theatre Offers Summer Camps

Do you know a child or teenager with an interest in theatre? Registration for Gamut Theatre's Summer Theatre Camps has begun. We have a selection of educational - and fun! - two-week camps for students from ages 6 to 18. Numbers are limited, so register early!

Younger students up to age 12 always have a blast learning the basics of theatre and performance at Popcorn Hat Players Summer Theatre Camp. Taught by fulltime members of the Popcorn Hat Players, this camp is designed to foster self-confidence, imagination, and creativity. Popcorn Hat Players Summer Camp is so popular that we have two sessions available.

Teenagers have a choice of two camps. Shakespeare Camp for Teens is a wonderful way for students to immerse themselves in the bard's genius and explore some of the most intriguing characters ever created for the stage. Improv Camp for Teens made its debut last year, and was such a success that it has been extended from one to two weeks! Artistic Director Clark Nicholson will lead teenagers through some of the hilarious and dynamic improvisational exercises he picked up from the masters at the Upright Citizens Brigade last year. For two totally different theatre camp experiences, enroll in both!

For more information on the camps, head to the Summer Camps page on our website. You can register online conveniently and securely using a Visa or Mastercard, or print a registration form (for either PHP camps or teen camps), fill it out, and send it in with a check.

Remember, if you are a member of Gamut Theatre Group, you may be entitled to a discount on Summer Camp tuition! Check our Membership page for more information or to become a member of Gamut Theatre.

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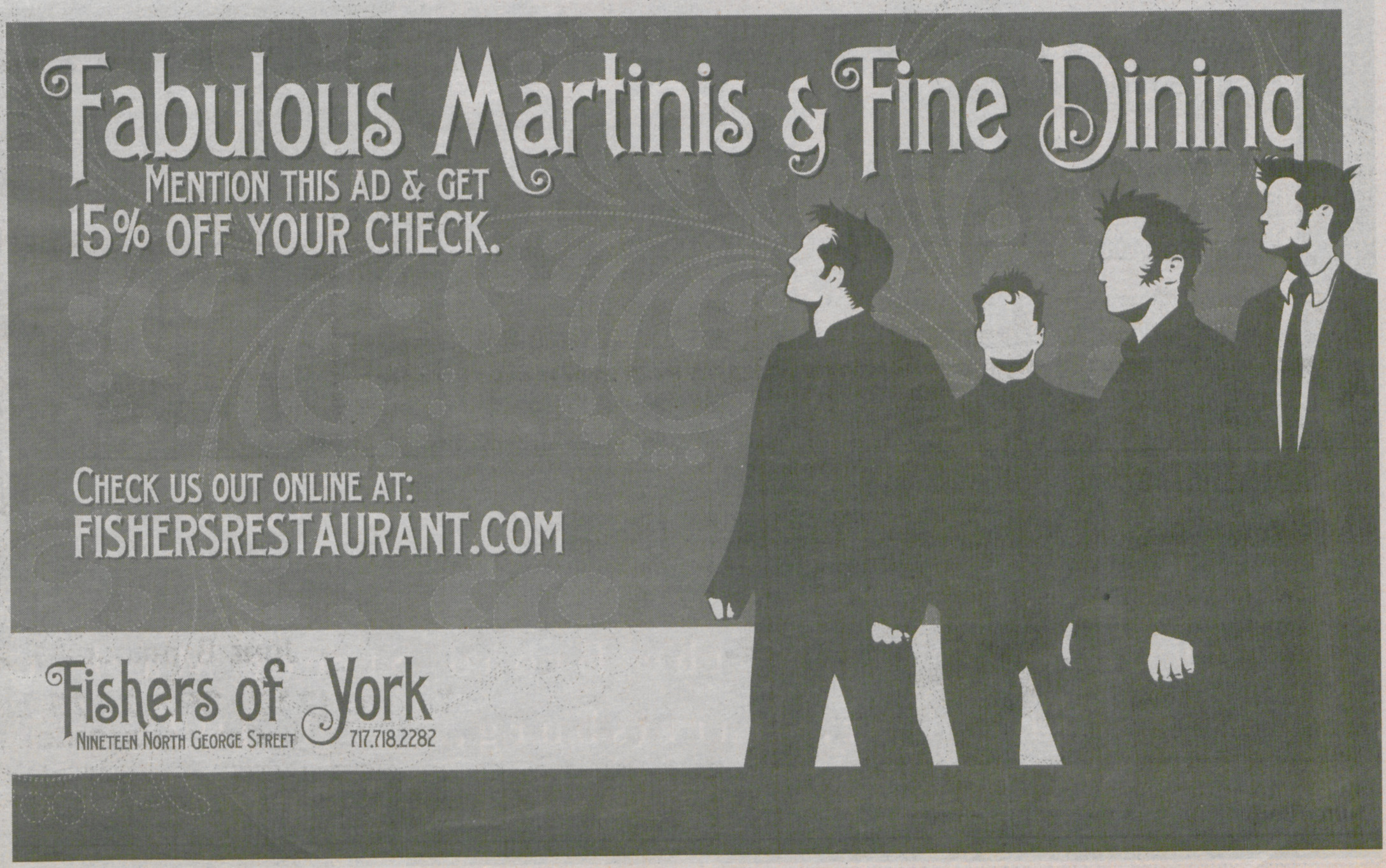

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Lesbian Notions

Lesbian Politics Is Local

by Libby Post

Has anyone noticed the lack of lesbian leadership at our national organizations lately? We used to hold some key leadership positions.

Elizabeth Birch and, then, Cheryl Jacques ran the Human Rights Campaign. Urvashi Vaid and Kerry Lobel were among the women who sat in the executive director's chair at the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. Joan Garry built the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation into an organization that commands the attention of powerbrokers from Washington, D.C., to Hollywood.

Each of these lesbian leaders took off for greener pastures. Now gay men are sitting in their seats. Joe Solmonese now helms HRC, Matt Foreman has reinvented NGLTF, and Neil Giuliano assumed GLAAD's top spot a few months ago.

I'm not faulting their work - just making an observation. However, with a lack of lesbian leadership at the top, we once again run the risk of the uninitiated seeing our diverse community as "just gay men." While Joe, Matt and Neil aren't going anywhere, it behooves us to not lose sight of the myriad lesbian leaders we still do have in our community.

Thankfully, my day job and my writing put me in touch with lesbians throughout the country who are leaders at the local level. From time to time, I'll be introducing you to these remarkable women who have made a real difference in their communities.

To start, meet Leslie Thompson, the 48-year-old executive director of Affirmations Lesbian and Gay Community Center in Ferndale, Mich., outside of Detroit. Having worked for nonprofit organizations her entire professional life, Thompson's third executive directorship was the charm when she took the driver's seat at Affirmations six and a half years ago.

"It's so cool to do something for a nonprofit that did something for me," Thompson said in a recent interview. "Affirmations saved my life."

After two unhappy, closeted relationships - one that prompted her to attempt suicide, and the second that was an "upstairs/downstairs" living arrangement in a two-family house, where her partner's children never knew about their relationship - Thompson's third was with an out lesbian who frequented Affirmations herself.

It was during that relationship that Thompson stepped through Affirmations' doorway over a decade ago. "I realized I still had shit to deal with. I was overwhelmed by the stereotypes of what I thought lesbian and gay people would be. I went to Affirmations and saw everyday people."

Recognizing herself in the people she met at the Center's support groups and various social, educational, and recreational programs, made all the difference for Thompson. "Affirmations became a refuge. I was there three to four times a week. It totally changed my life."

Now Thompson is returning the favor. Under her leadership, Affirmations has become financially healthy - when she started it was running a deficit. But that's not all - during her tenure the Center has gone from having no staff to 14 full-time and seven part-time staff members, from serving 250 people a week to averaging 767 each week, and from a $350,000 budget to a $1 million budget.

These feats pale in comparison to what Thompson considers Affirmations' biggest accomplishment to date - the successful completion of a $5.5 million capital campaign that is giving the Center its own home. "We'll be going from renting to owning, from 7,500 square feet to 17,000 square feet," Thompson said. "Our goal is to serve 3,000 per week."

Being a leader like Thompson isn't easy. It takes vision, hard work, and perseverance. It also takes a tough skin. "The LGBT community is quick to criticize. We eat our own," said Thompson. But that fact of LGBT life hasn't stopped her. "I wouldn't change anything. I think it would be boring to be straight. I can't imagine missing any of the opportunities I've had as a lesbian."

Those opportunities include effecting change by being a role model. "It's not just about being a role model, it's about coming out and role-modeling happy, healthy lives."

Thompson walks her talk. She and her partner, Colleen Hamlin, who fell hard for each other on New Year's Day 2005, got married this past January in Windsor, Canada. It was a family affair with 170 in attendance, including Hamlin's parents and seven brothers and sisters, and Thompson's sister, two brothers, and 85- year-old mother. Thompson's 16-year-old nephew came out at the wedding. She smiles while telling me her brother hasn't spoken to her since.

While Thompson is glowing from her Canadian nuptials, she knows there's still so much more for the LGBT community to do here in the States. "Just because we can't get married here doesn't mean we can't get engaged" - in LGBT activism, that is.

Thompson's penchant for one-liners like these has also led her to the stage. In addition to leading her community, she leads straight audiences right to the laughs as a stand-up comic at Mark Ridley's Comedy Castle in Detroit. She's won competitions, and she jokes that she'd "be out of here in a minute" if she ever got discovered.

For the sake of Detroit's LGBT community, let's hope the only folks who "discover" Thompson are funders, donors, and the folks who come out because of her leadership.

Libby Post is the founding chair of the Empire State Pride Agenda and a political commentator on public radio, on the Web, and in print media. She can be reached care of this publication or at LesbianNotions@qsyndicate.com.

Heartstrong continued

Team is based in Seattle WA. The all-volunteer staff has driven over 297,000 miles doing outreach work across the States, making HeartStrong the most extensive grassroots outreach in the history of the glbt movement. The organization is the only organization with a mission to reach glbt students from religious educational institutions.

In addition to making school visits and speaking to the public about the problem, Adams has a web site (exgay.com) where he shares his personal story and offers to answer every email. He has become both a resource and advocate to many students.

More information: www.heartstrong.org email heartstrong@heartstrong.org.

Dear Dot continued

decide to explore this situation with a professional who can help each of you be clear about your feelings. A professional can help with developing a plan to position the closet door where you both are comfortable.

In the end, you will have to decide if this is a "deal breaker" for you or if you can accept him where he is in his coming out process and enjoy the life you have together as a couple.

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June 1, 2, 3
1 The Vagina Monologues

June 8, 9, 10
2 Amy Salloway: Does This Monologue Make Me Look Fat?

June 15, 16, 17
Deborah Jean Templin: 3 Singing for the Cows

June 22, 23, 24
4 Sara Felder: Out of Sight

June 29, 30, July 1
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Susquehanna Twp. HS Grad

DJ Seth Gold at Club Z April 27

By Winnie McCroy
NYC Correspondent

DJ Seth Gold returns April 27 to Club Z to spin hot dance tunes. The move is a way, says Gold, to give back to the community he was raised in.

Gold is a 1997 Susquehanna Township High School graduate. He also was graduated from Penn State University 2001.

Alternative Central joined sexy, baby-faced Gold in the Upper West Side offices of Project Publicity to discuss his work as one of the East Coast's most promising young DJs.

Gold began his career as a DJ at the tender age of 14, spinning tunes at a local ice skating rink. "It was my first experience, and something I really liked doing," said Gold. "But in my high school in Harrisburg there weren't a lot of options to get involved in DJing."

With help from his father, Gold began plying his skills at clubs in Philadelphia and New York, and found "it was more successful than I thought it was going to be. Eventually I was booked two or three weekends a month."

While attending Penn State, Gold decided to drive some of his demos up to New York "on a whim and a prayer." He connected with people at Kurfew, a young gay man's dance party, and the rest is history.

Back then, he spun a lot of Madonna, and popular club songs like "Finally" by C.C. Penniston, plus Robin S. and La Bouche.Gold brushed his sandy blond locks from his eyes, flashed a winning smile, and said, "The energy of dance music is what attracted it to me initially. All of my friends were listening to hip-hop in high school, which I like too, but I was really one of the only people I know of that liked dance music."

Gold said he favors vocal pop with house infused in it, "120-130 beats per minute, where you have that energy but it's not a barrage of sounds hitting you in the face." But he admits that above all, he plays for the crowd. His ability to move seamlessly among different types of music has allowed him to move quickly in the industry.

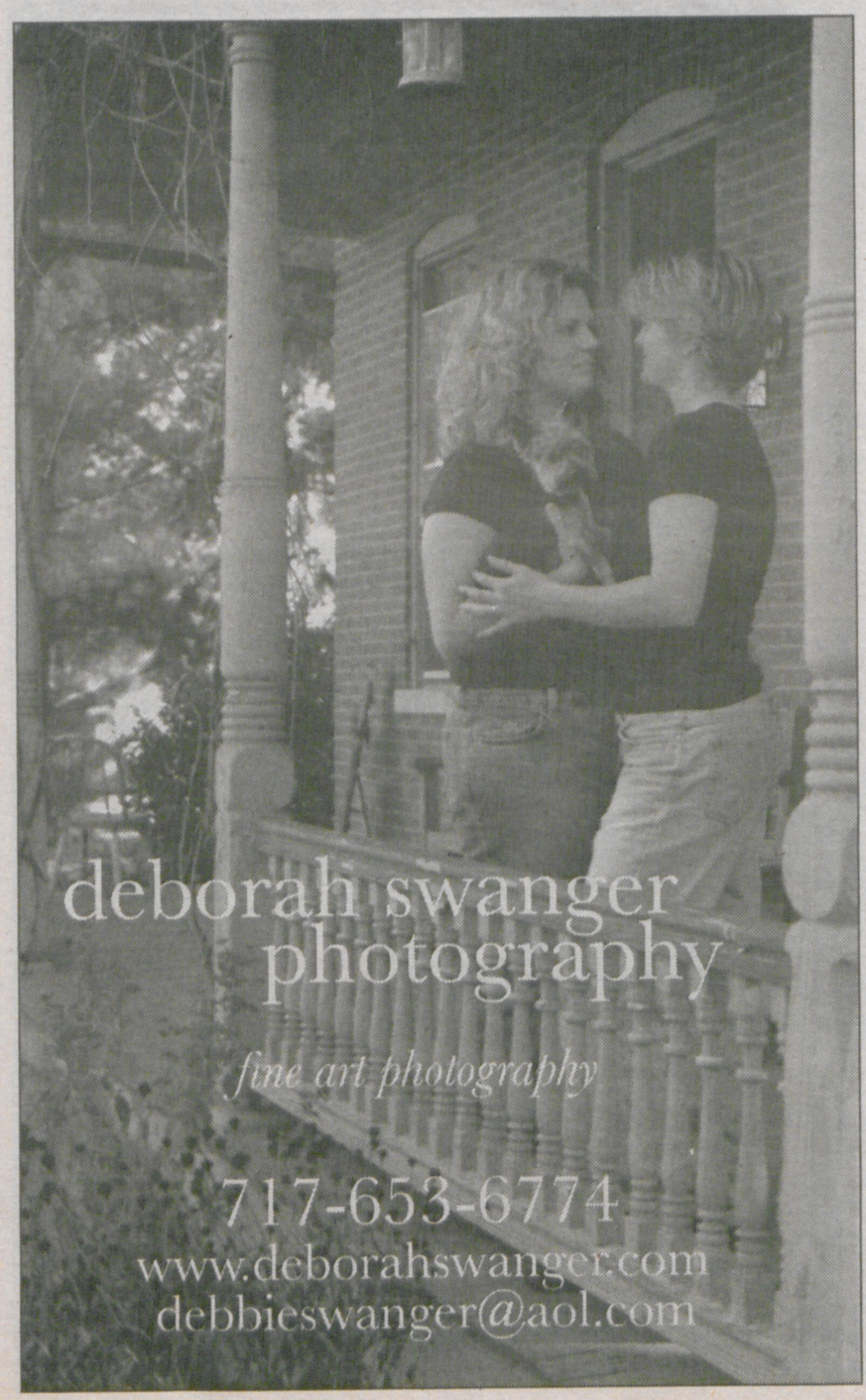
"As a DJ, diversifying enabled me to get booked when normally I wouldn't," said Gold. "If a club is looking for a certain style they'll be like, 'Let's call this kid because he knows how to play what we want, and he'll play other stuff, too.'" Gold recalls weekends where he would play pop music at Heaven on Saturday night, a hip-hop party on Sunday night at Stonewall in the West Village, then travel to Nation in Washington, DC and play house music.

"I literally had weekends where I would play three different kinds of music on three different nights to three different kinds of crowds," said Gold. "In the beginning it was somewhat tedious; I had to carry a lot of stuff with me, I never knew what to expect where. But I feel like it helped me, because I gained an important perspective on things from that."

He also found great opportunities at Heaven. After spinning at the Gay College Party at Heaven, he was asked to do a "Party Groove" CD for Centaur Music. "It was a combination of being in the right place at the right time, and also being the person they were looking for," said Gold.

Gold has seen the gay club scene change since he first started to spin in New York five years ago at the Kurfew party at Twirl. "There's genres of gay parties in addition to different genres of

continued on page 31



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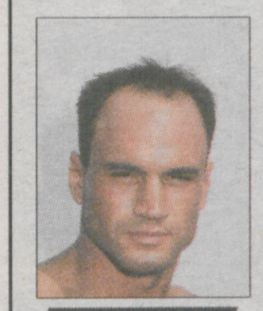

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Seth Gold continued

straight parties, which you just don't get anywhere else," said Gold, who said that when he spins in smaller cities, there is usually one club for everyone. "Whereas in New York, on Sunday nights you have your crowd at Maritime, your crowd at Spirit, at Stonewall, so there's a large variety of things that you can choose from to do."

When Gold isn't spinning, he prefers to sit and have drinks with friends, although he admits "part of the fun of going out in New York is you can go to six or seven places in one night, and see people you know everywhere."

These days, Gold's schedule doesn't leave much room for anything but spinning records. His favorite club to spin is Spirit, he said, because the club is important to the history of dance music in New York City, as "pretty much any big DJ known as a New York DJ has played there at one point or another."

Although Gold is still young—his 27th birthday bash will be April 29 at Nation—he is hardly a babe in the woods. To see Gold spin, visit Club Z on April 27, check out his gig at the Cherry Party in Baltimore on April 8 at the Hippo, or help him celebrate his birthday at Nation in DC on April 29. "I'm working on some things for that that are hopefully going to pack the house and blow the roof off. It's going to be a fun night!" said Gold.

For more info, visit www.DJSethGold.com

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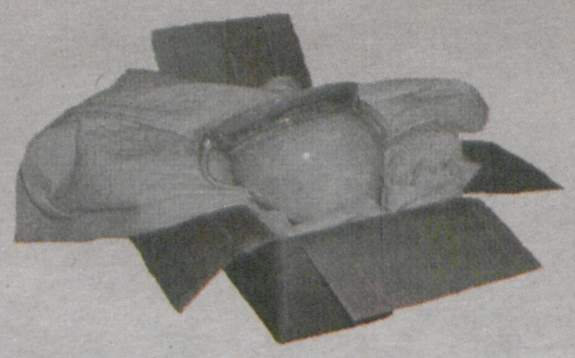

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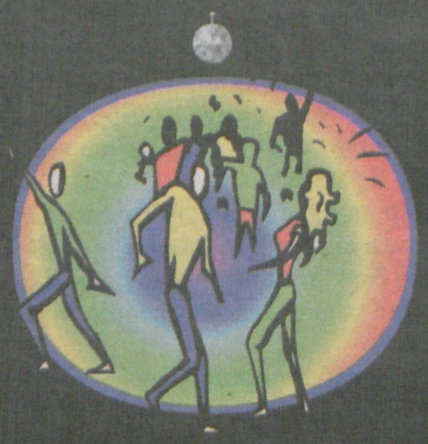

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Monroe's 80th continued

The Misfits (1961)

Written for Marilyn by playwright Arthur Miller, her then-husband, this was not only her final film but also Clark Gable's. Their deaths - his before the film's release, hers a year later - make this stark, mournful portrait of a changing West an unintended elegy for both stars.

Directed by John Huston (who had directed Marilyn in an attention-getting role as a baby-doll mistress in the 1950 thriller The Asphalt Jungle), this movie is itself a misfit, powerful and probing yet self-indulgent and maddening. As an aging, outmoded cowboy, Gable is superb. At 59, he's weather-beaten but still roguishly charming and intensely masculine.

In Reno for a divorce, Marilyn hooks up with him, becoming the catalyst for his taking stock of his pointless life. Marilyn displays heartbreaking compassion, but Miller's writing exploits her vulnerability to such an extent that her hypersensitivity sometimes feels like overkill. The Misfits may wallow in black-and-white gloom, but it has much to savor. Gable and his costars, Thelma Ritter and gay Montgomery Clift, have revelatory moments, while Marilyn shows phenomenal potential for acting triumphs that were never to be.

John DiLeo's most recent book is 100 Great Film Performances You Should Remember But Probably Don't.

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Social/Business Professionals. Meets every other month. PO Box 135 Harrisburg, PA 17108 Phone: 717.612.8445. Email: BAGAL-PA@aol.com.

Common Roads - Youth group. Ages 14-24. Social/Information/Support. Social activities every Friday eve at 7:00 P.M. 1300A North 3rd St, Harrisburg. Email: info@common-roads.org. Website: www.common-roads.org. Voice: 717.920.9534.

Gay & Lesbian Organization of Reading & Allentown -P O Box 541,Bethlehem , PA 18016, non-profit social group for adult men & women, singles & couples. 1 or 2 activities each month including potlucks, bowling, movie nights, hikes, dinners, etc. Email: glorain-pa@aol.com.

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Pennsmen. Leather/Levi/Social. Membership is open to anyone over the age of 21 with an interest in the lifestyle. Meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month at the 704 Strawberry. Contact: Steve at 717.232.3785. Website: www.pennsmen.org, Email: jesjames71@comcast.net.

Pride Festival of Central PA - Planning meetings. Meets second Tuesday of the month at 7:00 p.m., Volunteers welcome. Email: info@harrisburgpride.org. Website: www.harrisburgpride.org. Voice: 717.234.0328.

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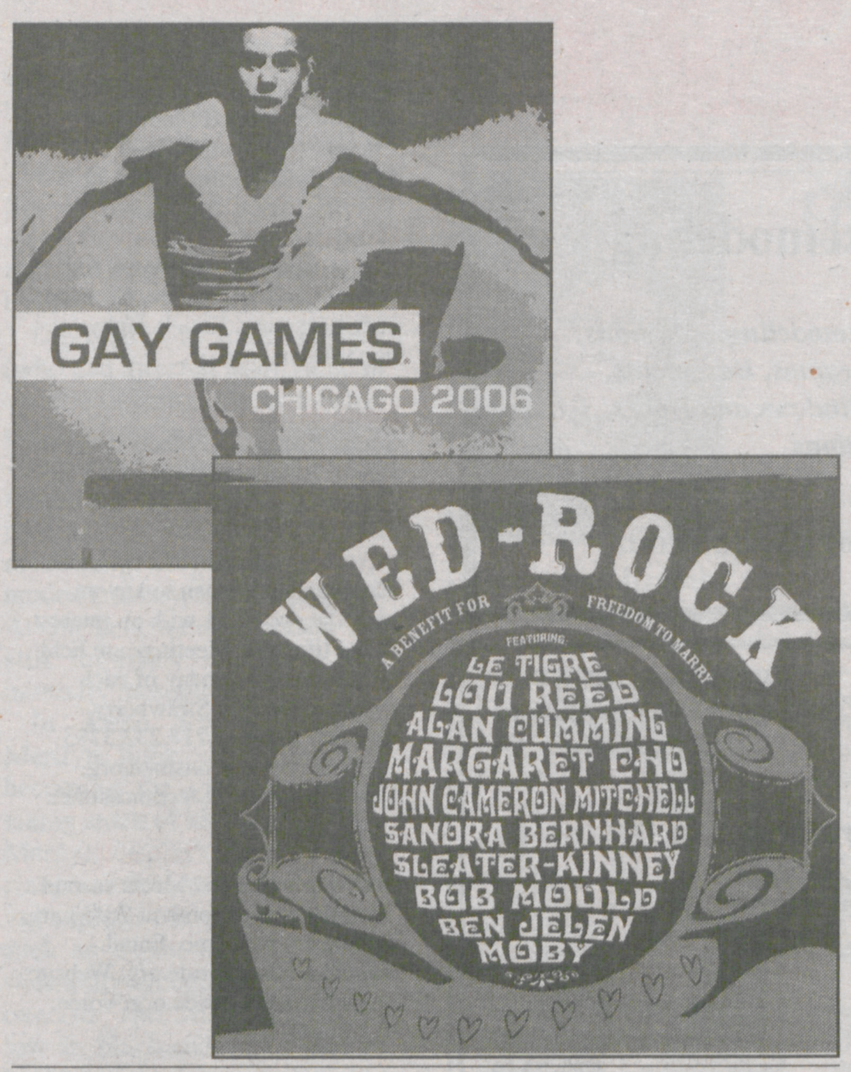

Published Poet Maria C. James Releases CD

Published Harrisburg poet Maria C. James recently released "FREEVerse" her first spoken word CD now available at www.mariaCjames.com The CD features 10 dynamic examples of James' performance poetry at its best.

"I don't like to be boxed into one category," says James, "The poems range from upbeat expressions of identity and culture, matters of faith and the age-old subject of love. There is something for everyone."

James' phenomenal spoken word style is unmatched. Her dramatic performances go far beyond the realm of your average "poetry reading." She's won several poetry slams, and in 2004 she wowed audiences in Court Street Poetry Jam at Open Stage of Harrisburg. Her new CD, FREEverse pairs her powerful words with the smooth sounds of soul music, promising to entertain as well as inspire.

"Maria James is the poetic shelter we seek out during the stormy existence we call life," said Harrisburg's former poet laureate, Iya Isoke. "Her poetry fits like a prayer for a sinner, meditation for those caught in the turmoil of chaos..."

Common Roads: Authenticity Is Important

By Michelle Simmons
Executive Director
Common Roads

Authenticity is important. Whether it's acting authentically about coming out or about being honest with ourselves and our current or potential partners. Authenticity means treating ourselves and others with respect and dignity, about living a life full of joy. That's what we strive for, and that's our hope for the next generation.

I've been thinking a lot about what we adults are teaching and modeling for future generations since I came on board at Common Roads. Our organization was created 14 years ago precisely to offer a safe alternative to bars and underage clubs for lgbtq youth. The founders believed that young people really needed a place where they could interact with each other and with competent adults without all the baggage associated with alcohol, drugs, sex, you name it.

Common Roads has grown over the years, and we're still providing that safe space for lgbtq youth. We always hope that what the youth learn here they'll be able to take with them out into the "real world," where they're constantly confronted with discrimination, bullying, outright bigotry.

We also know that this particular generation has grown up with so many mixed messages: on the one hand, they've been taught to "Just Say No." Oh wait, that's my generation—and a lot of good that's done us. At the same time, their culture and ours is saturated with the ethos that drugs will cure whatever ails us. Whether it's Ritalin, Prozac, Cymbalta (the latest and greatest), Ambien,Viagra, Oxycontin, whatever—we've come to know these brands intimately. And this generation has grown up knowing that drugs are here to help us cope with the difficulties of modern life. In fact, it's near impossible these days to get by without at least one of the above.

In bioethicist Carl Elliot's book, Better than Well, he writes about the paradox of many of these "enhancement technologies," that they actually help many people lead more authentic lives—whether they're hormone regimens for transgender folks or anti-anxiety medications for those with social phobias. And Sharon O'Brien in her memoir on depression, The Family Silver, notes that Prozac is to depressives as insulin is to diabetics.

The question is still worth asking, though: How much of a jump is it from prescription drugs to illicit ones? We freak out over underage drinking, tobacco use, Meth binges. Yet our own homes are chock full of meds.

As we all know, it's hard enough being a young adult; life is just so much more fast-paced and competitive these days. When you add the extra work of being a minority in a majority-rule culture—one that may be more accepting of lgbtq issues on a superficial level, but not where it really counts—learning to live an "authentic" life surrounded by misleading images and messages can be especially daunting.

After all, here we are in the middle of a political climate in which the term "family values" is used to exclude families, where sex education has become "abstinence education," where academic freedom in our colleges is now being questioned for its "bias." Even the word "authentic" itself is increasingly being used to describe things that have been copied so well that they can pass for the original. Anyone own a $200 pair of "authentic vintage-wash" jeans?

Regardless of what generation you grew up in, one of the biggest challenges of reaching adulthood is learning to be skeptical about the world around you without growing cynical. Actually, it's probably a lifelong process. And navigating adolescence as a queer kid is not for the faint-of-heart.

So I am encouraged - and humbled - by the enthusiasm and spirit of the young people I meet at Common Roads. Believe me—they are not naïve about their place in society, yet they continue to approach the world honestly. In a world where advertisements for hair color products exhort us to be more "real," their authenticity is truly a breath of fresh air. It turns out that they may have more to teach me than I do them.

Common Roads provides Friday-night activities and Sunday drop-in hours. Youth meet and attend educational programs, youth-focused arts and leadership projects. CR also offers training to schools and social-service providers on lgbtq issues. The organization provides resource materials to area organizations and individuals, and partners with other community groups to advocate for equal rights. Information: 717-920-9534 or www.commonroads.org

Camp Camp Makes You Brand New

Remember summer camp? Central Pennsylvania resident Jeff Welshans does.

"What makes CampCamp special is its location, its activities, and its people," Welshans says. Camp Camp is a place where glbt folks can be themselves – in a way they probably couldn't growing up, when they mostly had to hide at summer camp.

"Maine is absolutely gorgeous, and at camp you can do anything from kayaking and mountain biking to hanging out on the waterfront," Welshans says. The campers, he says, are an amazing group of people from all walks of life from all over North America.

"I really like that Camp Camp offers an equal mix of men and women. Too often it seems gay men do their thing, lesbians do their thing, and never the two shall meet," Welshans says, noting that "sometimes the lesbians even let us win at sports!"

2006 is Welshan's third going to Camp, "not only because I love going back to reconnect with the friends I've made, but also because I've only done about half of the activities that I want to try." This year he plans to go rock climbing and give the pottery wheel a spin.

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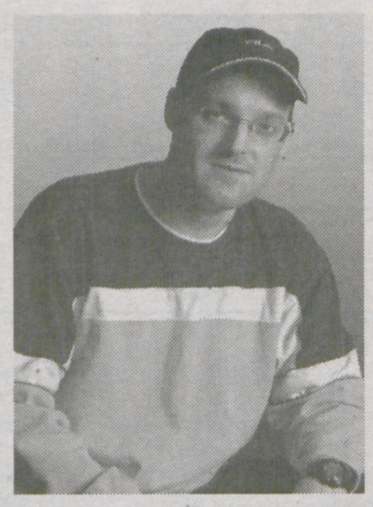
Music Review



DJ Barry Spins Round Round

Welcome to my world of music. I wanted to take a moment and thank everyone who reads my column. I have been writing about music for Alternative Central for over a year now. I appreciate all the positive feedback and it's great to be part of such a quality publication.

Goldfrapp

Currently playing in dance clubs is the hot new song "Ooh La La" by Goldfrapp. The song found on the CD "Supernature" has a catchy hook and is full of sound. The CD is full of orchestral electropop and mature dance songs with sexy female vocals. Even with a couple earthy ballads the vocals weave in and out of the beats, with an almost erie feeling but, it is pleasant to listen to. Goldfrapp's last single "Number 1" almost hit number one on the dance club charts. It was a huge hit in larger city dance clubs.

Kim English

Kim English hits the ears again with the song "It Makes A Difference." In the past Kim has had some great success in clubs but has never made it to radio. The girl has some strong vocal chords when belting out her words for all to hear. This time she is either lacking music arrangements or the song is not as strong as others have been in the past. It was time for her return to the clubs but this one is not going to do much for her.

Jenna Drey

A new favorite club hit of mine is "Why Should I Believe You" by Jenna Drey. Every now and then a song will come along and for some reason you like it, this is one of those. The song remixed by Josh Harris is up-tempo and a poppy dance song. Jenna has a three octave vocal range and her voice just soars along with the music. This is a hit on my list and is fun to listen and dance to.

Bette Midler

Bette Midler makes her way into the dance charts and clubs with the single "Fever." Yes, we have all heard this song before. The song was first done by Peggy Lee and most recently redone by Madonna. This time around, the song has a new sound due to DJ and song remixer L.E.X. Hard pumping beats flow as Bette's vocal belt out the well known lyrics. This song may have a short life due to Miss Midler's fan base not being what it used to be.

2nd Thursday 80s

Ready for a blast from the past? Get down and have some fun dancing to all your favorite songs from the 80's. Stallions Night Club in Harrisburg has an 80's New Wave Dance Party Night. Mark your calendars for the second Thursday of every month. The first New Wave Night was such a success Stallions will feature it once a month now. Come out and enjoy your favorite sounds of the 80's and me DJ Barry B playing them.

Theatre Round-Up continued

Harrisburg Theatre

Harrisburg Theatre hosts its !8th Annual Arts Awards, May 6, 6:30 pm at Whitaker Center honoring Melissa & Clark Nicholson of Gamut Theatre Group and Capital BlueCross for their contributions to the arts in the Capitol Region.

A reception with heavy hors d'oeuvres, cash bar and silent auction starts at 6:30 pm in the Kunkel Lobby. The awards ceremony will be held in the Sunoco Performance Theatre at 8:00 pm with dessert and coffee in the Lobby from 9:15 pm on. Tickets start at $100 per person. Call 232-5501 for more information.

OLIVER!

Theatre Harrisburg presents Oliver! On June 9, 10, 11, 14, 15, 16, 17 & 18 at Sunoco Performance Theatre at Whitaker Center. Times vary. One of the great stories of Charles Dickens comes to musical life. This is old-fashioned musical theatre at its best: warm-hearted, vigorous and tuneful with spectacle, comedy and drama for all ages! Ticket range $15 to $29 . Contact The BOX at 214-ARTS.

Open Stage Auditions

Open Stage of Harrisburg will hold auditions for Eve Ensler?s THE VAGINA MONOLOGUES on Monday, May 1 and Tuesday, May 2 at 6 p.m. The play will be part of the Seventh Annual WomenSpeak Festival and run one weekend only, June 1, 2 and 3. Rehearsals are scheduled to begin immediately.

Needed are three women to play multiple roles. One woman must be African American. Auditions are by appointment only. All those auditioning are asked to prepare a two-minute contemporary monologue.

Auditions are by appointment only. Call the theatre at 214-3251 or e-mail casting@openstage-hbg.com to schedule an appointment.

Open Stage of Harrisburg located on the street level of the Walnut Street Parking Garage in downtown Harrisburg. Open Stage of Harrisburg is a Constituent of Theatre Communications Group (TCG), the national organization for American theatre.

Totem Pole Playhouse

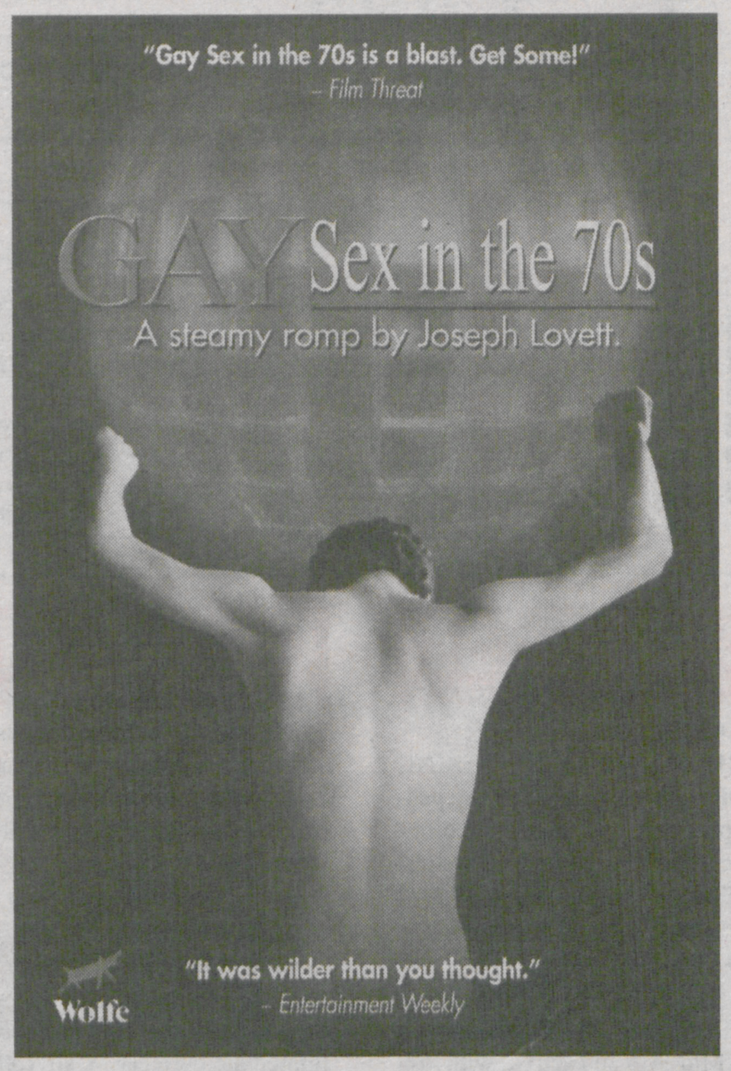
Caledonia Theatre Company is pleased to announce their 2006 Summer Theatre "Fairy Tale Acting Camp" to be presented at the Totem Pole Playhouse this summer. This years Theatre Camp is designed for children between the ages of 8 and 15.

"Totem Pole Playhouse Summer Theatre Camp" will be held June 19-June 30, 2006 at the Totem Pole Playhouse. The camp will run Monday thru Friday for two weeks, 10:00 am to 4:00 pm daily.

Spend a magical two weeks in the beautiful Caledonia woods and at the Totem Pole Playhouse for our first ever Fairy Tale Acting Camp. Week one, campers will be given a special role in a fairy tale play, rehearse and perform for family and friends. Week two, campers will work collaboratively to write their own fairy tale plays for a second performance. Students will design their own costumes, props and sets for each play. Creative drama games will also be incorporated. The cam p is ideal for both the beginning and experienced child actors. 717-352-2164 or email a request to boxoffice@totempoleplayhouse.org.

Producer Talks to AC

DVD: Gay Sex in the 70s



Produced in 2005 • USA • 72 min. • color • English

During the 12 years from the Stonewall Rebellion (1969) to the first reported cases of AIDS (1981) there was a search for a definition of what it meant to be gay. And for the most part, that search required openly exploring a sexuality that for decades had been forbidden.

Alternative Central talked to Gay Sex in the 70s documentary producer and director Joseph Lovett. He was the producer of the first in-depth AIDS investigations for national television at ABC News' "20/20". For "70s," Lovett focuses his lens on the unbridled sexual passion and exploration that marked those 12 years.

Lovett explains that "Americans in New York and elsewhere were cutting loose from puritanical values and ascribing to the catchphrase of the time 'if it feels good, do it.'" Suddenly, not only was sexuality allowed for gay people, sexuality was in and of itself a good thing.

"A good response to the film so far, although there have been some mixed feelings," Lovett says. He's referring to the fact that some object that the film may add fuel to neoconservative and family values groups because of its "no holds barred" approach to accurately depicting gay sex in the pre-AIDS era. "We shouldn't air our laundry in public," one person argued. "Our enemies want us to be sexless," Lovett says, noting that some, not himself, fear showing accurate portrayals will force a backlash. (We thought there was one going on.)

Today, most people – even young gay men – have no idea of what life was like in the streets of New York at that time. There are few left alive to tell them of the astounding sexual freedom and sexual excitement of day-to-day life. Considerable attention has been given to Stonewall itself and to the 80s in terms of HIV and AIDS, but much less notice has been given to the period of time between the two.

This film provides that "hidden history" in a frank and thoughtful way, raising questions about how far the gay liberation movement has come and how acceptance of sexuality can affect sexual behavior, promiscuity, and the sometimes murky relationship between liberation and integration.

With access to a filmic and photographic treasure trove of erotic life on New York's West Side Piers, trucks, bars, dance clubs, bathhouses and beaches, Lovett's cast of storytellers (including Larry Kramer, Scott Bromley, Barton Benes, Rodger McFarlane, and others) takes us from the remarkably repressed pre-Stonewall period to an era of sexual liberation unparalleled since ancient Rome. Straightforward, funny and titillating at the same time, their stories are told with remarkable wit, humor and perspective. For younger people – those who became sexually active during the age of AIDS – this film may be a startling revelation.

Look for more controversial work from Lovett. He's currently working on a "crystal meth" documentary with Peter Staley and Jay Corkland.

Gay and Lesbian Switchboard of Harrisburg, inc.

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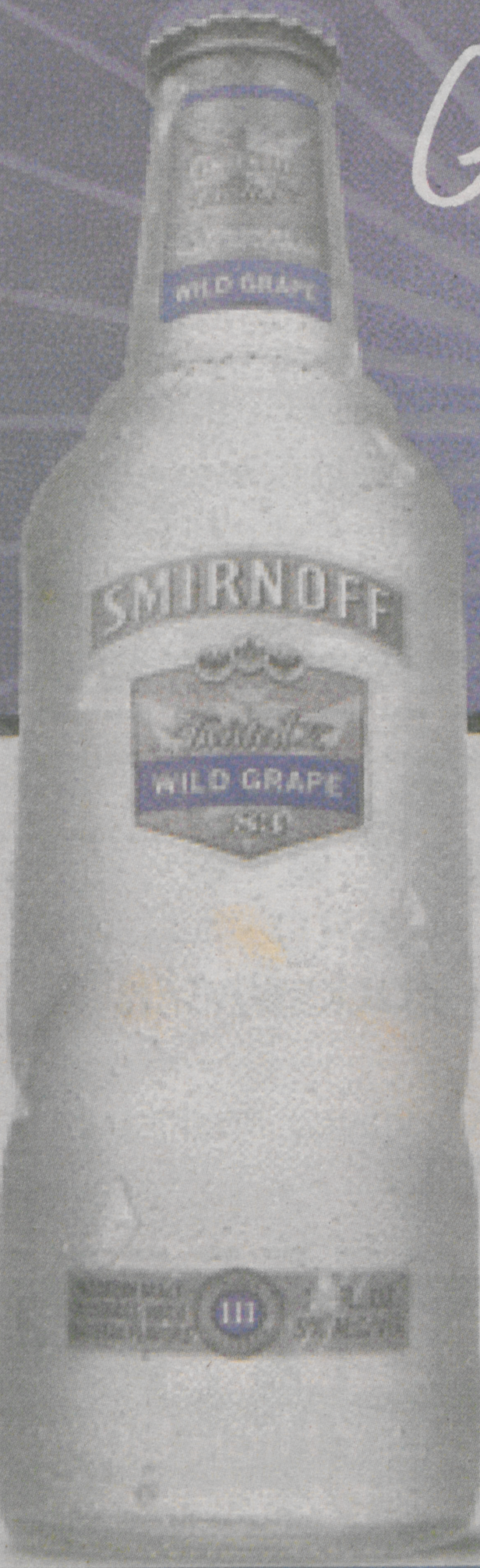

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